
REVISED EDITION

*American Diplomacy
in Action*

RICHARD W. VAN ALSTYNE

*The University of Southern California
Los Angeles, California*

Foreword by

GRAHAM H. STUART



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To my wife

MARGARET WARE VAN ALSTYNE

FOREWORD

THE ERA OF American isolation has passed even from the viewpoint of our representatives in the Congress. No longer can the United States bask in a fancied security based upon vast ocean frontiers and freedom from strong and hostile neighbors. The overwhelmingly destructive attack upon Pearl Harbor proved to the most rabid isolationist that the United States can no longer go it alone. The airplane and the atomic bomb have once and for all annihilated the barriers of distance and the "safeguards" of "natural" frontiers.

One of the most vital results of this changed condition is the corresponding importance of a carefully considered foreign policy. Mr. John Citizen has had it brought home to him that his former blithe disregard of the political and economic crises of distant regions is dangerous to his own well-being. The repercussions of a Balkan assassination reach not only to the financiers of Wall Street but to the New England industrialist, the Iowa farmer, and the California rancher. In fact the time has come when foreign policy is even more important than domestic policy because it affects not only the prosperity of the individual but also his life and the future of his children.

Under these circumstances the American people have come to realize the importance of their State Department and their Foreign Service. The terrible destructiveness of modern wars requires an additional line of defense which must take precedence over the Army and Navy. To prevent a war is now more advantageous than to win a war. The cost of present-day warfare has become so great that even the victor loses. Why, then, should not nations work out their relations in such a way as to avoid armed conflict? If individuals can live together peacefully within state boundaries, cannot these same people live together upon a similar basis with like people in neighboring countries? In other words can we not have foreign policies of compromise and collaboration instead of criticism and conflict?

Such a development should be particularly feasible under a democratic system of government. Domestic problems are solved only by

the give and take of public discussion aided by the objective advice of the trained expert. Could not foreign problems be submitted to the same processes? Could not the administration carry on a successful foreign policy if the foreign office and its diplomats were supported by an intelligent public opinion accustomed to analyze international problems objectively and in accordance with ascertained facts?

However, the first prerequisite to success is an enlightened electorate interested in and familiar with the many problems arising in international intercourse. The problems are not new—they have existed ever since men organized themselves into states. Unfortunately, for centuries an aura of secrecy has enveloped diplomacy and the man in the street has not been interested. But at last the call to arms has ceased to be a heroic and patriotic gesture. Scientific development has made warfare the cold-blooded destruction of the enemy's life and property with the minimum of effort—and upon the largest scale possible. The citizen then finds it vital to know the whys and wherefores of this Moloch of mankind. He finds it useful to study his country's foreign policy and to try to understand why it has failed to work out peaceful solutions of these problems between states.

Any volume covering the history of American foreign policy will give a survey of the political and economic relations of the United States with the rest of the world. But the present volume goes a step further—and it is a very important step. Since the citizen in a democracy is responsible for his country's policies, domestic and foreign, should not that citizen have placed before him the specific problems as they arise in the form of cases, and thereby be forced to evaluate both the principles and the policies which have resulted? The law schools of the country have found this approach to the study of legal problems most valuable, and the great majority have adopted it. This analysis of American foreign policy by Professor Van Alstyne has followed the same method, and the result should be equally successful. He has taken the problems which the United States has faced in a world of neighbors, he has given the background of facts and shown how in the specific cases the solutions have been obtained; and he has indicated the principles which have been drawn from them. It is foreign policy subjected to laboratory treatment. Professor Van Alstyne has produced a scholarly study of American foreign policy which is as valuable for its unique method of approach as for its comprehensive treatment of the subject.

GRAHAM H. STUART

STANFORD UNIVERSITY, CALIFORNIA
July 28, 1946

PREFACE

THIS BOOK is the product of nearly twenty years of concentrated study of American diplomacy and foreign policy, originally inspired by the late Professor Ephraim Douglas Adams of Stanford University. Work begun at Stanford was continued, after a few years of teaching, by intensive research among the manuscripts of the British Public Record Office and the British Museum. Most of the results of that research have previously found their way into print.

Some five years ago I conceived the possibility of vitalizing the study of diplomatic history by presenting it as a series of related instances, or cases. The project suggested the modification of the chronological approach to history; but the more I reflected on the notion the less I was impressed with the importance of mere chronology. The wealth of history consists chiefly of illustrations that can be extracted from it; and illustrations can be the better evaluated if put in some significant relation to each other. My ideas, which in 1938 were somewhat embryonic, received a favorable hearing from Professor William Hawley Davis, editor of the Stanford University Press, and from Dr. Graham Stuart, Professor of Political Science, Stanford University. Encouraged by them, I set to work, and the book gradually developed into virtually a full-length treatise on American diplomatic history. For the constant friendship and interest of Mr. Davis and of Dr. Stuart, and for their careful editorial aid, I feel an especial gratitude.

Popular comprehension of American diplomacy, present as well as past, has been seriously hampered by undue emphasis on principles which, unless defined, are little better than useless abstractions. Carelessly employed, they can be so distorted as to produce harmful results. Hence the importance of sticking to each illustration or pertinent incident, and of reaching general conclusions only after these have been mobilized and correlated. Patient and tolerant study of

the subject will definitely reject two vehemently repeated but never proved assertions: (1) that the United States has had no real foreign policy, and (2) that as a nation in the New World its policies stand unrelated to, and unaffected by, political conditions in Europe. Neither of these beliefs finds support in the chapters of this volume.

This book is based on extended reading of the printed documentary sources, but in the main, of course, I have relied on the specialized contributions of other scholars found in the files of the professional historical journals as well as in published books. The Bibliography, at the back of the book, is arranged by chapters. Footnotes have been restricted to citations from the sources, and to occasional comments or explanations which it seemed better to separate from the text.

For details of interpretation, style, and organization I am solely responsible. Nevertheless, every chapter has benefited from the distinguished and friendly criticism of two or more colleagues in its field. One of the compensations of the work has been the stimulating correspondence I have had with my critics. To each and all of them I give heartfelt thanks. Professor Thomas A. Bailey of Stanford University read practically the entire manuscript, chapter by chapter. The Honorable Hunter Miller, Editor of the *Treaties*, Department of State, has been unsparing of his time and energy, and searching in his criticism. I should say at this point that his magnificent volumes on the *Treaties and Other International Acts of the United States of America* have been indispensable in my effort to vitalize the concepts of American diplomacy.

Professor Nathaniel Pfeffer of Columbia University read two of the chapters on the Far East and was helpful in choosing a title for the book. Professors J. Bartlet Brebner of Columbia and A. R. M. Lower of United College, Winnipeg, gave me the benefit of their advice concerning the chapter on "The Defense of North America." Professor John D. Hicks of the University of California, Mr. Carlton Savage of the Department of State, and Professor Robert L. Schuyler of Columbia University, among others, read the chapter on "The Second World War." Professor Thomas E. La Fargue of Washington State College reviewed the chapters dealing with the interests of American security in the Far East. Dr. E. Wilson Lyon, president of Pomona College, read the chapters on the Louisiana Problem and the Naval War of 1798 with France. Professor Dexter Perkins of the University of Rochester, the country's leading authority on the Monroe Doctrine, read the introduction to "Security and the Monroe Doctrine"; and Professor Julius W. Pratt of the Univer-

sity of Buffalo, famed for his diagnoses of "manifest destiny," went over the chapter which synthesizes American ideas of expansion. President Charles Seymour of Yale provided a penetrating critique of my draft chapter on "The World War of 1914-1918." Professor Lester B. Shippee of the University of Minnesota aided with suggestions for the chapters on "Alaska and the Quest for Canada" and "The Partition of the Spanish Empire." Dr. Mary W. Williams, professor emeritus at Goucher College, reviewed the chapter on "The Solidarity of the Good Neighbors." In addition, the following went over various portions of the manuscript and aided with suggestions: Professor Samuel Flagg Bemis of Yale; Professor Edward Mead Earle of the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, New Jersey, Dr. Malbone W. Graham of the University of California at Los Angeles; Professor W. Stull Holt of the University of Washington, and my former colleague at Chico State College, Dr. Lew D. Oliver. But, of course, my deepest sense of obligation goes to my wife, Margaret Ware Van Alstyne, who has helped carry the whole arduous task, including the labor of reading the proof, and to my two young sons, who have borne with their father's preoccupation. Mr. Stanley King of the Food Research Institute, Stanford University, drafted the maps.

RICHARD W. VAN ALSTYNE

CHICO, CALIFORNIA
August 18, 1943

PREFACE TO THE REVISED EDITION

At the suggestion of the publisher, preparation of a second edition was commenced late in the fall of 1945. Numerous changes have been made. Those chapters which treat of contemporary diplomatic issues, namely chapters 9, 21, and 26, have been lengthened in order to bring their contents up to date. A new chapter on the United Nations and the problems of the peace has been added to the group of case studies on collective security. The Conclusion has been entirely rewritten, the bibliography expanded, and the index remade. For this latter task I have to thank Mr. William Hawley Davis, former editor of the Stanford University Press. Two new maps and an organizational diagram of the United Nations have been added, and the endsheet map of the Pacific Hemisphere has been revised. Finally I have tried to benefit from the findings of historical scholarship published since the appearance of the first edition. Accordingly previous users of the book will discover a number of places where appropriate changes have been made.

For criticisms of portions of the manuscript for this new edition thanks are due Dr. Leon W. Fuller and Dr. Seward W. Livermore, both of the Department of State, and Mr. Paul E. Hadley, of the University of Southern California, formerly also of the Department of State. To the students of my class in American Diplomacy my appreciation also goes for the stimulation they have given me. And the staff members of the Stanford University Press in their splendid helpfulness are by no means to be forgotten.

R. V. A.

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA
July 4, 1946

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*American Diplomacy
in Action*

American Diplomacy in Action

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

THE COURSE of American diplomacy is a course of action. The principles which are accepted as controlling are the result of historical growth. They are not stereotyped formulas, to be picked from the file from time to time, as occasion seems to demand, and applied mechanically, on the contrary, they have a vitality which has been cumulative in the history of the United States. Familiar phrases or expressions are consequently not to be taken at their face lest they become shopworn and meaningless. As Mr. Justice Holmes once wrote of the United States Constitution, the significance of American diplomacy "is vital, not formal; it is to be gathered not simply by taking the words and a dictionary, but by considering their origin and the line of their growth."

It is the misfortune of American foreign policy, however, that it has been depicted too often in terms of "doctrines," some of which have assumed the characteristics of popular slogans. A "doctrine" is a creed, a belief accepted more or less blindly; and, without concrete expression or definition, it may have scant connection with realities. Furthermore, as can be shown from the history of the Christian religion, even theological dogmas have undergone repeated changes and variations, conditioned by the cultural soil and climate of the peoples who accept them. Such terms as the Monroe Doctrine, nonintervention, freedom of the seas, neutral rights, Pan-Americanism, the Open Door, the Good Neighbor policy, to cite familiar ones, unquestionably have meaning. But they do not define themselves, nor do they operate in a vacuum. More than that, being subject to opinion, they are open to varying interpretations according to time and place; and they possess vitality only to the extent that they are flexible and adjustable. There can be no dead

hand in American diplomacy. The United States has been continually at work tilling and refertilizing this field in the past; it must continue to do so in the future

History is an empirical study, a vast accumulation of precedents, and though, of course, the analogy is imperfect, the citing of precedents by courts in order to determine a rule of the common law suggests the possibility of organizing historical study in a somewhat similar way. It is this feature that makes the organization of the present volume different, with the chapter on the United Nations, for example, coming in the middle rather than at the end. The author hopes that his organization, as well as his interpretation, will challenge the reader and will better reveal the immense range and continuity of American diplomatic activity throughout the past. Let it be recognized at the outset that diplomatic history shares the common fortune, or fate, of all historical study in opening up a rich field for valid argument. Any claim to a "final" interpretation of history would be more than dubious, and particularly in a field such as diplomatic history, where seldom are all of the sources available, especially in matters of the recent past, and where impulses and underlying motives often remain concealed. Nevertheless history, in order to possess life, must appeal to the imagination as well as to the intellect; it must be "an act of faith" as well as an exercise in judgment; and the business of the historian involves, now as ever, examining all of the evidence available and then pronouncing a balanced judgment.

Furthermore, in writing this analysis the author has tried to keep in mind the truth that there are no exact boundaries to its subject field. American diplomatic history is not to be interpreted solely through the acts or words of the Department of State and its representatives. On the other hand, it holds a close and constant affinity to the underlying questions of geography, colonization and economic development, defense, popular feelings and whims, sectionalism, and issues in domestic politics. Let it also be said emphatically that it is never to be considered apart from the foreign policies of other nations, particularly those of western Europe. To an increasing degree during the last half-century, the same must be kept in mind with respect to the countries of eastern Asia.

With these several objects and considerations in view, the author has ventured to depart somewhat from the customary chronological and topical methods of treating American diplomatic history. Without disregarding the importance of the time sequence in history, he wishes to advance the idea of comparative study; and he

has planned his volume as a series of related case studies, or specific instances, all of which illustrate American diplomacy in action. Each case study, or chapter, is a historical essay which approaches the problem in question from the standpoint of an analytical narrative; and the problems selected relate to major issues in the diplomatic history of the United States. The book is selective, as all works of this kind must be; but the writer has aimed at developing a range of studies sufficient to include all but a very few of the vital problems of the past.

As the basis for classification, the author has assumed the existence of three underlying concepts inevitably associated with American diplomacy—the concepts of security, expansion, and neutrality. The book is divided accordingly, and the chapters are arranged in groups which facilitate comparison and illustrate the several phases of each basic concept. In order to give synthesis and unity to the several case studies, each part carries an introductory chapter which analyzes the origins and the historical growth of the idea which it is discussing. By means of these introductions the reader should gain an insight regarding the complexity and the close interrelationship of the motives and principles that animate American foreign policy. It must never be forgotten that ideas, like diseases, are no respecters of boundaries, and in accordance with this truth the author has aimed at a discriminating but none the less flexible classification of his illustrations. Assuming that security is the chief end of the United States, as it is said to be of every sovereign state, there always remains the choice of means. The military axiom that offense makes the best defense is by no means inapplicable to other areas of human relations, certainly it is no stranger to the field of diplomacy.

It is important, above all, to avoid the error of imagining that American foreign policy follows certain rules or formulas capable of simple definition. American statesmanship may have displayed the traits of "short-sleeve diplomacy," for instance, from time to time in the past; it may have been innocent, occasionally even crude, in comparison with the experience and professionalism long characteristic of European diplomacy. But, while enjoying a reputation for idealism, it has seldom strayed far from the realm of the practical. And if its operation has been in a measure—and only in a measure—different from that of European diplomacy, it has been equally governed by opportunistic considerations. No principle or doctrine of American diplomacy is to be accepted as valid until tested and applied in the hard school of experience. The Monroe Doctrine, for instance,

has long been vital to American diplomacy; but it has had different meanings to different people and, we might add, to different nations. It has gone through a cycle of interpretations, and the geographical area with which it is historically associated has no such exact boundaries as was once popularly supposed. The Doctrine is a part of the framework of American national security; but it by no means defines the limits of that security. Other factors have contributed to the evolution of this concept. The same may be said substantially of the other expressions which make up the body of ordinary terminology respecting American foreign policy.

It would be an omission if, in closing these remarks, mention were not made of the mammoth world struggle which forms the general environment in which this book has been written. The author conceives of history as a dynamic study, a school of experience which, when properly analyzed, is the fittest means of suggesting lines of action for the present and the future. Nevertheless, it is good to remember the modest reservation respecting the role of history made by Captain Mahan, whose ideas have so affected American foreign policy. "Past history," he declared, "contains indeed lessons which, well digested, are most valuable for future guidance; but, when the attempt is made to utilize their teachings, contemporary conditions are found to differ so much from those preceding them that application becomes a matter of no slight difficulty, requiring judgment and conjecture rather than imparting certainty." Long accustomed to activity, American diplomacy fills a central place at the time of writing on a scale undreamed of in the past. Questions of foreign policy bear an urgency seldom equaled in previous generations. The war has forced a revolution in communications, among other things, and has brought air power permanently into the equation of national security. The record of American diplomatic history shows that the United States was never really isolated, and that it never intended to be so. It has had too many objects it has wanted to achieve. Judging by its past interest in commercial air routes and its tendency to take advantage of its central position for the extension of air lines to what were formerly remote parts of the world, it is hardly to be suggested that the historic process of expansion and making new contacts will be reversed. Any realistic consideration of the course of American diplomacy for the future must take this background into account.

PART I

Security & the Monroe Doctrine

INTRODUCTION

THE OLDEST and simplest principle of American security rests on its geographical separation from Europe. Conditions in the seventeenth century accustomed men to the thought that they were in a New World, a different sphere, where society would work out its destiny apart from that of Europe. The colonists wanted to feel that way—for the most part they were people who had been dissatisfied in the Old World, and they were in search of a better life in the New. Both the width of the ocean and the length and rigor of the voyage greatly promoted the view. It was natural to think in terms of two different worlds, two separate hemispheres; and the map-drawing technique of the day confirmed the impression. Furthermore, this conviction was by no means confined to popular sentiment; it found occasional expression in formal agreements between the governors of rival colonies who wished to remain at peace with each other in spite of conflict between their mother countries; and it even received treaty sanction between European sovereigns who were anxious to preserve peace at home though there might be fighting "beyond the Line." Indeed, it was common for European states in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to maintain a formal friendship with each other in the Old World while their subjects continued a state of piracy and war in the New.

Workable during the period of colonial infancy, such distinctions had to be discarded toward the end of the seventeenth century. Intercolonial rivalries and European politics thenceforth tangled inextricably. Between the English Revolution of 1688 and the American Revolution of 1776 there were four great intercolonial wars, involving the Spanish, the French, and the English. In the first three, European issues were controlling, but in the final one—the French and Indian War—the struggle between the French and the British for the mastery of North America obscured all other questions. The great Peace of Utrecht, which closed the War of the Spanish Succession in 1713, had rough-shaped a threefold partition of the conti-

ment and the adjacent islands. The Spaniards were left in control of their Caribbean and South American empire, together with its northward extension through the Floridas, the British were, of course, in possession of the Atlantic seaboard from Maine to the Carolinas, in addition to valuable island holdings in the West Indies and the Bermudas and the new acquisitions they had gained at the expense of the French in Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, and along the shores of Hudson Bay, and at the same time the French maintained their valuable gateway through the Gulf of St. Lawrence to Quebec and thence to the Great Lakes and down the corridor of the Mississippi.

In general, the British emerged from the treaty with the best positions from the standpoint of future operations; and they continued to exercise the initiative. The Peace of Utrecht promised a certain amount of stabilization, which was effective for more than a quarter of a century. Nevertheless, the contest for trade and territory progressed without interruption, especially on the part of the dynamic British and French. In the Caribbean the Spaniards possessed a tempting reservoir of commerce, protected from outside competition by the letter of the treaty alone. With such a forward position as Jamaica in their grasp, with a toehold on the coast of Honduras, and with an aggressive merchant marine and industry at home, the British naturally evaded the treaty and struck out for the control of the Caribbean trade. In this field of expansion the American Colonies stood to benefit; Yankee vessels shared in the wholesale smuggling which conditions in the Caribbean invited, and returned to their home ports bearing chests of precious specie. Eventually the smuggling produced open war between Britain and Spain, but, inasmuch as the operations were principally naval, they attracted little attention from the Colonies.

On the mainland a growing land hunger throughout the Empire forced a closer community of interests between colonies and mother country in the half-century after the Peace of Utrecht. The Virginia governor, Spotswood, was among the first to call attention to the importance of securing access to the country of the Great Lakes, and the Board of Trade in London recommended building a line of forts as far as Lake Erie, thus cutting the French colonial empire in two. The effective boundary of the English colonies remained east of the Alleghenies; that did not prevent preliminary deals with the Indians west of the mountains, however, nor keen speculation in "western" lands, in which both Colonial and British investors participated. The Peace of Utrecht fixed no boundaries in the wilderness; from the standpoint of the map maker that was hardly practicable,

for much of the country in 1713 was still unexplored. Some feeble efforts to compromise on boundaries were made during the next forty years, among them being an offer of the British government in 1754 to stabilize the western boundary of the British colonies at the crest of the Alleghenies in exchange for the St. John's River in New Brunswick. Such an agreement would have closed the gap between Nova Scotia and the New England colonies and thereby have given the advantage of a solid British front on the Atlantic from the Gulf of St. Lawrence to the Floridas; but it would also have meant the sacrifice of the interior. Actually the French held the temporary advantage in 1754, and apparently they felt safe in rejecting the offer. They had built a chain of forts extending from Niagara westward along Lake Erie as a safeguard for the route to the Mississippi, they had also fortified Crown Point on Lake Champlain and had thereby guarded themselves against a possible invasion from the direction of Albany. Now, in the winter of 1754, they beat the English to another crucial point at the forks of the Ohio, and began driving them back east of the mountains. George Washington was the leader of the Virginians who thus suffered expulsion, and his repulse strengthened the fear already spreading throughout the English colonies that the French, with the help of the Indians, meant to drive them into the sea.

Colonies and mother country made common cause in this last great colonial struggle on a scale never before experienced. The French kept them on the defensive for nearly three years; but in 1757 William Pitt instituted a grand offensive against the vital spots of the French Empire—Louisbourg, Quebec, and Fort Duquesne at the forks of the Ohio. Pitt employed the combined strength of the Colonies and the home country to break the French grip in North America, and he succeeded to the full; at the Peace of Paris in 1763 France lost everything except two small fishing islands off Newfoundland, and her Spanish ally surrendered the Floridas. Britain had a solid empire in North America from Hudson Bay to the Gulf of Mexico and west to the Mississippi. The other half of the continent was either unclaimed or belonged to the Spaniards, with the Russians maintaining a foothold on the extreme northwest coast.

The roots sent down by William Pitt were hardly strong enough to hold. The great war minister was a true empire-builder in peace as in war. He was thrown from power before the war was over, however, and the puny politicians who ran the British government for the next twenty years were unequal to the responsibilities of

victory. Instead of giving statesmanlike attention to the new conditions brought about by the war, they blundered into a quarrel with the old Colonies that had helped win the victory. The time-honored system of colonial subordination was no longer fitting. Pitt and Edmund Burke in England, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, and many others in the Colonies pleaded for liberalization in vain, however, and the rift widened into revolution.

By independence the Americans hoped to realize three ambitions:

(1) A return to the tradition of isolation from European politics, which the wars of the eighteenth century had interrupted but not extinguished. Tom Paine, the firebrand of the Revolution, was probably not the first, and certainly not the last, to blame Britain for American involvement in European wars. "Any submission to, or dependance on Great Britain," he wrote,

tends directly to involve this Continent in European wars and quarrels, and set us at variance with nations who would otherwise seek our friendship, and against whom we have neither anger nor complaint. . . . It is the true interest of America to steer clear of European contentions, which she can never do, while, by her dependance on Britain, she is made the makeweight in the scale of British politics.¹

The desire was easy to express, but elusive when it came to be put into practice. Even as Paine wrote, the Colonies were receiving vital aid from France and, as we shall see, showed a tendency to lean more and more heavily on that country.

(2) They wanted to rid themselves of the British mercantile system, which excluded them from the advantages of equal trade with other nations. Particularly they wanted commercial agreements with France and other Continental countries that would assure the access of American foodstuffs and other products to European ports in war as well as in peace. They wanted full "neutral rights," that is, freedom to trade with either party to a war without interference by the navy of the other. A "Treaty Plan of 1776" that was drafted by the Continental Congress and sent to Paris fitted in perfectly with the American desire. It was a bid for French support against British interference with commerce on the high seas—and it appealed for French armed protection of American ships against Barbary* corsairs in the Mediterranean. Like the isolationist tradition, the policy of "freedom of the seas" was easy to formulate but difficult to execute. The American "Treaty Plan" coincided with the commercial interests of France and the Continent in general, and it blossomed

¹ Thomas Paine, *Common Sense* (Conway edition), I, 88-89.

into a number of paper agreements; but it was ineffective against British sea power.²

(3) There was in 1776 an embryonic hope of superseding Great Britain as the dominant power in at least North America and perhaps in the whole Western Hemisphere. A surprise capture of Ticonderoga and Crown Point the preceding year had opened Canada for invasion; also the attempt to conquer the St. Lawrence Valley had been made, but it was unsuccessful. Nevertheless the Americans wanted the door left open for another trial if they should choose to make it. The "Treaty Plan" thus stipulated that France should pledge herself to make no conquests of British territories on the mainland of North America or of the adjacent islands. The Americans themselves proved unequal to another invasion of Canada, but at Paris in 1782 Benjamin Franklin tried to coax the British into an agreement to make over that country to the United States. He used an argument that was to become habitual with American expansionists of the next century: the presence of the British flag in North America would be likely to cause wars in the future between the two countries.³

Succor from the French and the Spanish was indispensable in waging even a successful insurrection. The Americans relied on outside aid for practically all of their powder and a large part of their arms during the whole war. For their part the French saw an opportunity in the American Revolution to avenge the disaster of 1763 and recover their position as a great power. They had been covertly watching and hoping for rebellion in America since the days of the Stamp Act. Until June 1778 they gave "aid short of war," and they prevailed upon the Spaniards to do likewise in the interests of the European balance of power. French gun runners ventured into American ports early in 1776; their help was systematized through a dummy concern headed by the playwright, Beaumarchais, and operating chiefly in the three French ports of Le Havre, Nantes, and Bordeaux. Matériel was shipped from government arsenals in France to the account of this company; thence it was borne on French and Dutch ships to the West Indies, and from Cap Français in Haiti, from Guadeloupe and Martinique, and from the Dutch island of St. Eustatius the stuff was finally smuggled into American ports. Some of it was bought with credits furnished by the American commissioners in Paris and redeemed by shipments of flour and

² The "Treaty Plan of 1776" and the problems of neutral rights are reserved for lengthier discussion in Part III.

³ See Part II

naval stores, but the primary purpose of the French was not commercial, and the operations of Beaumarchais were generously subsidized.

All this "secrecy" was necessary from the French and Spanish standpoint, because they were not ready for an open clash with Britain. Shipments from Spain, made through a Spanish merchant in Bilbao, reached the Americans by way of Cuba. Powder also came up from a factory in Mexico through the port of New Orleans. And both Spain and France opened their harbors to American privateers operating against British commerce on the European side of the Atlantic. Actually there was no real concealment, and the British government had full reports of these activities; but Britain continued to indulge them on the part of the French until June 1778, and on the part of the Spaniards for an additional year, because she too was loath to have too many enemies at once. She did not even attempt to interrupt the "neutral" arms traffic between European ports and the West Indies.⁴

On their side the Americans eagerly sought French aid but paused before making an alliance. The treaty commissioners sent to France in 1776 were told to seek help on a large scale but were hedged about with restrictions on the matter of an alliance. They were to run no risks with a possible French fancy for the reconquest of Canada. John Adams, who wrote the treaty plan, was wary of entanglement in purely European issues. "We ought not to enter into any alliance with [France]," he declared,

which would entangle us in any future wars in Europe, . . . we ought to lay it down, as a first principle and a maxim never to be forgotten, to maintain an entire neutrality in all future European wars, . . . it never could be our interest to unite with France in the destruction of England, or in any measures to break her spirit, or to reduce her to a situation in which she could not support her independence.⁵

But, before the year was ended, a wave of discouragement swept over the Continental Congress: it was frightened by reports of British preparations for the spring campaigning, and it sent word to Franklin and to Silas Deane in Paris to make a definite bid for a French and Spanish alliance. The Americans now offered to share their conquests in North America, including even Canada, with the French, and Spain was to be helped in her scheme to recover the Floridas.

For their part the French surrendered their hearts, if not their

⁴ Compare the policy of the North toward the West Indian arms trade in the American Civil War, see Part III.

⁵ *Life and Works of John Adams* (10 vols., Boston, 1856), II, 505.

heads, to the American cause. And Franklin was the man who could take full advantage of his opportunity. A familiar figure in Paris, he met perfectly the imaginative picture the French had drawn for themselves of America as a Utopia. A revolutionary-minded literary group had helped to strew his path with roses, and the American envoy kept the French press supplied with "good copy" about America, and even wrote some fiction about British "atrocities." Meanwhile he asked that the French furnish eight fully manned ships of the line and send thirty thousand stand of muskets and bayonets, with ammunition and artillery, to America under convoy. He got at least three ships of the line and increased "secret" assistance, but no direct convoy. The authorities at Versailles were proof against plunging prematurely into war, and were themselves divided on the issue. The finance minister, Turgot, was utterly opposed to making the venture—he had a realistic view of the financial weakness of the Bourbon monarchy. The foreign minister, Vergennes, on the other hand, was awaiting the opportunity to strike back at Britain but demanded proof that the American cause was not hopeless before coming out in the open. The king, Louis XVI, was inclined to favor his foreign minister, but only on condition that Spain too be brought into the war. The Spaniards had a larger fleet than the French, and without their help the prospect of waging effective war against British sea power was none too bright.

British campaigning in America turned into disaster in October 1777 with the surrender of General Burgoyne, and the French were pushed into a final choice. Tired of the war and anxious to head off their rivals in Europe, the British government tardily awoke to the possibilities of the kind of empire formerly sketched by William Pitt—one which preserved complete self-government for the Colonies. Franklin's opportunity came at last. He had never undervalued the American need for a French alliance if independence was to be won, and since his arrival in Paris the preceding December he had been trying to maneuver Vergennes into war. So far as the Americans were concerned at the close of the year 1777, it was a choice between going on with the war in alliance with France or accepting the British offer. Well-informed men in Philadelphia knew that the cause of independence stood no chance by itself. Franklin knew this too, and he made it clear to Vergennes. It was French policy to build up a counterpoise to Britain on the farther side of the Atlantic. Hesitation now would mean the prospect of a reorganized and reunited British empire in the face of which the French position in the European constellation would be weaker and more humiliating than

ever before. Hence the French decision to meet the American desire for an alliance and to take a chance on Spain's entering the war later.

The American commissioners, on February 6, 1778, signed two treaties in Paris. The first, a treaty of commerce and friendship, insured the continued use of French ports as bases for raids by American privateers against British commerce; otherwise it satisfied the American aspirations for "neutral rights" in future European wars. In the practical sense this meant that the French and Americans declared it to be their common interest to thwart British methods of maritime warfare. The second document was a treaty of alliance. France thereby recognized American independence, a step expected to precipitate war. When that event occurred, the French would make common cause with the United States and divide the conquests. The treaty gave the Americans a free hand to conquer the "Northern Parts of America, or the Islands of Bermudas"; and it gave the French a like freedom against the British Caribbean. Silence safeguarded the rights of Spain, and, of course, the liberty of France to deal separately with Spain concerning the future of her empire in North America. By implication the treaty deprived the Americans of the privilege of making war on the British in Florida, which it was understood Spain would like to get back; and while France resigned any right to seize Canada, she was not prohibited from venturing against Newfoundland, Cape Breton, and the North Atlantic fisheries. Both the French and the Spanish had a historic interest in the fisheries; and before the war was over they were resolved to win back their full rights there and exclude the Americans.

Finally, the treaty bound the United States and France together in a perpetual alliance. "The two Parties," it stipulated,

guarantee mutually from the present time and forever, against all other powers, to wit, the united states to his most Christian Majesty, the present Possessions of the Crown of France in America as well as those which it may acquire by the future Treaty of peace; and his most Christian Majesty guarantees on his part to the united states, their liberty, sovereignty, and Independence absolute, and unlimited, as well in Matters of Government as commerce and also their Possessions, and the additions or conquests that their Confédération may obtain during the war, from any of the Dominions now or heretofore possessed by Great Britain in North America⁶

⁶ Text of the treaty in Hunter Miller, *Treaties and Other International Acts of the United States of America*, II (Washington, 1931), 35-41. Italics inserted. Hereafter cited as *Treaties*.

True, the treaty of February 6, 1778, did not limit American freedom of action as completely as Congress had indicated its willingness to limit it in the preceding year; but neither was it the one-sided bargain John Adams had insisted on when he drafted the Plan of 1776. And it very definitely pointed to a continuation of France and Spain as champions in the American balance of power.

Through the alliance Vergennes hoped to derive a long-run profit by means of a "permanent union" with the United States, as he himself put it—the United States would henceforth operate within the French constellation instead of the British. To this end, the United States must be kept weak, a seaboard confederacy bound in by the British in Canada and the Spanish in Florida. Vergennes informed his ambassador in Madrid:

We do not desire by a great deal that the rising new republic remain exclusive mistress of this whole immense continent. Self-sufficient before long for her own needs, the other nations would be likely to reckon with her, because she, able to do without everything, would very certainly make a very hard law for them.⁷

The gravest risk the United States ran, however, was involved in the attitude of Spain. Like the French, the Americans were eager for Spanish support. George Washington himself in 1778 thought that Spain's help would be needed to back up the French alliance, sea power, said he, would have the "casting vote," and Spain alone had the necessary naval resources. Prospects of winning the war were no better in 1779 than before; indeed the financial predicament of the Americans was becoming desperate.

To see what he could do with the Spanish court, John Jay, then president of the Continental Congress, was dispatched to Madrid. As a price for an alliance he was told he could offer a guaranty of the Floridas by the United States in case the Spanish should recapture them from the British. But Adams attached to this guaranty an important qualification: the United States had a "natural right" to use the streams flowing through adjoining Spanish territory, and must have free navigation of the Mississippi and free use of at least one convenient port near its mouth for the transshipment of commodities to ocean-going vessels. This was a clear indication to the Spaniards that the Americans would not be content to be penned in east of the Appalachians, but would make a bid for the control of the western country; and the further offer of a guaranty of Spanish right to the Floridas was far from reassuring. Spain had less

⁷ Quoted in A. B. Darling, *Our Rising Empire, 1763-1803* (New Haven, 1940), p. 26.

confidence in the intentions of the Americans than she had in Britain. She distrusted republics, and, far from heeding the American wishes, she proffered her mediation to the British in order to influence the return of the Colonies to their original allegiance. John Jay remained at his post in Madrid for more than two years, but during his sojourn there he wrung no substantial concession from the Spaniards.

The Count de Vergennes had better luck, though at a price that was high for both France and her American ally. The Spaniards had a long list of demands to satisfy: they wanted French aid in recovering Gibraltar and Minorca in the Mediterranean, which they had formerly lost to the British, they desired a joint share in the Newfoundland fisheries, which the French were to recapture, if they could, but were not to open to the Americans; and they insisted on French support in restoring the Caribbean Sea to the status of a Spanish lake which it had held at the time of the Peace of Utrecht. Spain was to recapture the Floridas and would concede no "natural right" to use the rivers as a means of reaching the sea, and she was deaf to all pleas that she recognize American independence.

Vergennes achieved his goal in April 1779, without its being known to the Continental Congress, he completed a secret alliance with the Spaniards, and they entered the war two months later. Their heart's desire, however, was Gibraltar; and far from meeting American hopes for assistance, they ultimately enlisted French forces in a fruitless siege of the Rock that lasted till the end of the war. Meanwhile the military situation on this side of the Atlantic steadily deteriorated from the standpoint of American independence. In February 1781 it seemed almost hopeless. The British held three of the major seaports on the Atlantic coast—New York, Charleston, and Savannah—together with the corresponding hinterlands; they controlled the coast of Maine; and they were in possession of the forts on the Lakes between Champlain and the head of Lake Huron. From the Gulf of Mexico the Spaniards had launched a successful offensive against the British in West Florida, and by this time they had conquered all of the territory on the east side of the Mississippi as far north as a point opposite the mouth of the Arkansas. Successful American military operations in the interior were confined to a small area in the region of the Ohio River.

By this time, too, Congress had yielded to French diplomacy, which looked at Western questions through Spanish eyes. The general attitude of the Americans had been that they had to have an outlet on the Gulf of Mexico; otherwise independence would be but a fiction. Since there was slight chance of conquering the Floridas

and controlling the coastline themselves, they had always insisted on a "natural right" to navigate the rivers, particularly the Mississippi, through Spanish territory. But by February 1781 Congress was so discouraged and so desperate for Spanish help that it empowered Jay in Madrid to relinquish even this demand if necessary. The unhappy envoy ignored this dangerous expedient, but there is little reason for believing that it would have affected the Spanish attitude if offered.

France in the meantime was ready for peace; and Vergennes drew up a plan for Austrian and Russian mediation on the basis of a truce that would leave the British in control of all their holdings in America with the exception of New York. Austria and Russia were willing; and the British government was favorably disposed. It too was hard-pressed to make peace. For, despite the advantages she held in America, Britain's position in Europe was none too secure. French diplomacy had completely isolated her on the question of maritime rights. The Netherlands were maneuvered into the war through interferences with their trade with France through the Channel, and under the lead of Denmark and Catherine II of Russia most of the other Continental states with maritime interests joined in an armed neutrality. The ground was laid in May 1781 for a conference to be held at Vienna. Once held, such a conference would have made a chimera of American independence. But the meeting was never held. Prompted by John Adams, Vergennes made it a condition that American commissioners be admitted to the conference on the basis of equality with other states. Such a gesture was a mere sop to the principle of American independence as written into the treaty between France and the United States, but it caused the failure of the peace plans. British pride rebelled at what it interpreted as officious interference by the powers in a domestic insurrection, and the British government refused to confer.

The fortunate break for the American cause occurred in October 1781. A strong French fleet under Admiral de Grasse, sailing from the West Indies, entered Chesapeake Bay and isolated the British army under Cornwallis from its supply base in New York. Advancing by land, Washington hemmed in the British on the narrow peninsula where Yorktown is situated, and forced a surrender. It was virtually the end of the fighting, but not of the war. Six months later the British House of Commons, long chafing under a ministry whose policies had disrupted the Empire, unanimously passed a resolution forbidding further prosecution of the war in America; and a new ministry, representing a coalition of old-fash-

ioned Whigs and the followers of the now deceased William Pitt, prepared to negotiate a peace with the United States

When in June 1781 the Continental Congress had appointed its Vienna peace commission and sent them instructions, Yorktown had not occurred. Deep pessimism then prevailed in Philadelphia, and the members had submitted almost wholly to French guidance. La Luzerne, Vergennes' envoy in the American capital, had paved the way for this compliance by liberal gifts from his purse. The new commissioners in 1782 were told:

You will . . . use your own judgment and prudence in securing the interest of the United States in such manner as circumstances may direct, and as the state of the belligerent and disposition of the mediating powers may require. For this purpose, you are to make the most candid and confidential communications upon all subjects to the ministers of our generous ally, the King of France; to undertake nothing in the negotiations for peace or truce without their knowledge and concurrence, and to make them sensible how much we rely on his majesty's influence for effectual support in everything that may be necessary to the present security, or future prosperity, of the United States of America.⁸

The execution of such instructions, really inspired by the French foreign minister, meant putting the United States snugly under the wing of France, an object which, as we know, was primary with Vergennes. This was foiled, however, by the initiative and independence of the American commissioners—Jay, Franklin, and John Adams—who reached the conclusion that it was both possible and desirable to make a separate peace with the British. To be sure, this was not merely a violation of instructions; it also entailed possible disregard for the treaty obligation of 1778, which had pledged no separate peace. Yet to an extent there was moral justification for the course followed by the commissioners: French diplomacy was now markedly pro-Spanish, especially with reference to western boundaries in America. Spain wished to coop up the Americans east of the Alleghenies, and France was not loath to do likewise. The French had never entertained the notion of helping the United States to secure the western country, much less to control the Mississippi River to its mouth. It is quite possible they already had their own eyes on this stretch of country, as they surely did a few years

⁸ Francis Wharton, *Revolutionary Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States* (6 vols., Washington, 1899), IV, 477. Five commissioners were named: Jay, Franklin, John Adams, Henry Laurens, the American minister to the Netherlands, and Thomas Jefferson. Laurens, who had been held a prisoner in England, was released to take part in the negotiations in Paris. Jefferson failed to reach the French capital in time to participate.

after the war was over. The stark fact remains that strict fidelity to the moral obligation would have brought independence only in the Pickwickian sense. John Jay, fresh from Spain, grasped the essential bond of interest between that country and France and was an insistent advocate of separate negotiation. But the shrewd Franklin, a resident of Paris now for upwards of five years, had already opened talks with the British and was not blind to the advantages thus to be gained.

The underlying British purpose was to break the alliance between the United States and France. The new ministry was now reconciled to granting independence provided it could be sure that America was not going to remain a French protectorate. Moreover, Fox and Shelburne, who now dominated British politics, had plans for drawing the United States back into the British system. Shelburne, who inherited the ideas of Pitt, hoped indeed to see the Colonies revert to their former allegiance; Fox, who headed the Whigs, was indifferent to this outcome but believed in reconstructing a federal alliance between the two countries. Accordingly, one Henry Oswald, an elderly but genial Scottish merchant, was sent to Paris to smooth the path toward these objectives in quiet conversations with Franklin.

The American confided to Oswald his conception of *necessary* and *desirable* terms of peace. By necessary conditions Franklin meant (1) a full grant of independence and evacuation of all British troops, (2) agreement over the boundaries, including the western country, (3) confinement of Canada within limits such as not to conflict with the claims of the United States to the country south of the Great Lakes, and (4) resumption of the American liberty to fish in the territorial waters of Newfoundland and the Canadian colonies. Among the desirable conditions Franklin urged the reciprocal right of trade for the ships of each country in the ports of the other, and the British withdrawal from the whole of Canada. The latter surprising proposal, so audacious when contrasted with the actual military situation, he set forth as the *pièce de résistance*: if the British withdrew from the continent, he blandly explained to Oswald, the two countries would never have an incentive to quarrel again. It is difficult to judge how seriously Franklin made this last proposition. But the British were impressed by two points. (1) the United States must be given a completely independent status; and (2) there was a possibility of coming to some sort of an understanding based upon a customs union.

Agreement between the Americans and British was reached in

Paris on November 30, 1782. After recognizing the independence and sovereignty of the thirteen united states, the treaty disposed of the vital boundary issues. Canada remained British and was separated by a complicated river, mountain, and lake line from the United States. The northeastern portion of this line was not finally determined for another sixty years, the remainder was so drawn with the intention of dividing the Great Lakes between the two countries through the middle and terminating the western extremity so as to keep the upper part of the Mississippi River under the British flag. But the outstanding feature of the Anglo-American agreement was its transfer to the American flag of all the territory as far west as the Mississippi between the Great Lakes on the north and the thirty-first parallel on the south. This gave the United States its "street door," as Franklin had once designated the Mississippi. Without it the new republic would hardly have stood a chance of surviving. Both British and Americans were to have the right to navigate the Father of Waters from its source to the sea.

There was a joker in this agreement, however. The status of Florida had yet to be settled between Britain and Spain. Whichever power retained West Florida, the United States was certain to be in a precarious position. If Britain took it back, the Americans, to be sure, would have their right of navigation, but the British would be strong competitors for the trade of the whole Mississippi Valley; and it was agreed in a secret article that, if West Florida did go to Britain, the United States would retire northward from the thirty-first parallel to the mouth of the Yazoo, a much better position for the power holding the lower part of the river. On the other hand, if West Florida went to Spain, the Anglo-American treaty right of navigation would avail the Americans nothing; their interior would be landlocked. Since the British did cede West Florida to Spain in a separate treaty, and since the Spaniards refused use of the river almost at once, it was not long before the Americans began to feel the weakness of their position.

Nevertheless, the separate treaty with Great Britain frustrated the main Spanish design, seconded by the French, to shut the Americans away from the Mississippi altogether and if possible to drive them back as far as the watershed of the Alleghenies. Spain intended to divide the western country between herself and Great Britain at approximately the line of the Ohio. She did not trust the United States, and she wanted to put as wide a barrier between herself and the seaboard republic as possible. By negotiating for a separate peace, however, and especially by her liberal grant of the western

country, Great Britain gave the new republic a much better chance of survival and effectively came between her former colonies and their wartime French ally.

The French foreign minister was informed of the terms of the Anglo-American agreement on the day before it was signed. Thus he lost his original gamble of 1778, the United States did not emerge from the war as a French dependency. France had gained only to the extent that she had broken the solidarity of the British Empire; she had aided in establishing on the farther side of the Atlantic a new state whose policies of independence in the future might clash with Britain and thereby weaken the world power of that country. Vergennes was sufficiently satisfied with the result to continue financial support to the new republic despite the alarming cracks already visible in the structure of the Bourbon monarchy. With the separate American peace, moreover, came a blessing in disguise. France could now escape from the embarrassment of her commitment to Spain to aid in the capture of Gibraltar.

A general peace all around was negotiated in 1783, the powers at war with Great Britain, including the United States, signed definitive treaties on September 3. Only Spain and the United States could show any substantial results. Spain had buttressed her position in the Caribbean by getting back both of the Floridas; but she was obliged to confess the failure of her main object, the recovery of Gibraltar. By signing a definitive treaty replacing the agreement of November 30, 1782, which was considered as only preliminary, the American commissioners were able to avoid charges of dishonor and to preserve the appearances, if not the realities, of co-operation with France.

Progress toward a "federal alliance" which Fox and Shelburne had projected in 1782 proved unfeasible. Unavoidably it inclined toward the restoration of the colonial status of the United States. The project rested on the establishment of a customs union between the two countries, a defensive alliance for the protection of each other's territories in North America, and the use of the British navy to defend the United States by sea, the republic to furnish a portion of the supplies and recruits for the navy by way of compensation. In spite of its attractive features, acceptance of the proposal spelled abandonment of the underlying American idea of independence as laid down in 1776—neutrality and isolation from European quarrels, freedom from the British mercantile system, and an opportunity to work out a purely American destiny in the Western Hemisphere.

The thirteen United States—all too disunited, as the experience

of the postwar years was to demonstrate—emerged from the long war in 1783 in what seemed a hopeless state of weakness. But the leaders had courage and vision, and were determined themselves to define conditions of American integrity and security which a defensive alliance with Britain would have made out of the question. They took the first firm step toward their goal when they fashioned the Federal Union in 1787, and they revealed again that their concepts of American security involved an ambitious program of growth. Security implied far more than simple isolation, an idyllic haven of peace and safety shielded from a naughty world by the mighty Atlantic. It was a subtler concept than the ancient fiction of the two spheres by which the simple refugees of the seventeenth century had rationalized their desire for escape. In the minds of the men of the Revolution it meant *independence*—freedom of action in formulating and executing distinctive national policies, freedom to capitalize the natural advantages that Nature had given, freedom to work out an *American empire* of trade, territory, and political influence.

Alexander Hamilton expounded these ideas forcefully in *The Federalist* in 1787. An "adventurous spirit" distinguished the commercial character of America, he wrote. Union of the thirteen states under a single Constitution would protect the country against the discriminations of the European mercantile systems and facilitate the opening of new markets. And a federal navy must be created. Such a weapon would be not merely for defense (Hamilton does not even use this word), it would help to "baffle all the combinations of European jealousy to restrain our growth." It would promote "an active commerce, an extensive navigation, and a flourishing marine . . ." Especially could its weight be thrown into the scale to secure the mastery of the West Indies:

A few ships of the line, sent opportunely to the reinforcement of either side, would often be sufficient to decide the fate of a campaign, on the event of which interests of the greatest magnitude were suspended. Our position is, in this respect, a most commanding one. And if to this consideration we add that of the usefulness of supplies from this country, in the prosecution of military operations in the West Indies, it will readily be perceived that a situation so favorable would enable us to bargain with great advantage for commercial privileges. A price would be set not only upon our friendship, but upon our neutrality. By a steady adherence to the Union, we may hope, ere long, to become the arbiter of Europe in America, and to be able to incline the balance of European competitions in this part of the world as our interest may dictate.⁹

⁹ *The Federalist* (Lodge edition), No. XI, pp. 60-67. Italics inserted.

These were brave words for 1787, and more than a century in advance of complete fulfillment. Much closer to reality were the doubts exhibited by President Washington and his cabinet three years later, when a clash between Englishmen and Spaniards at far-away Nootka Sound in the Pacific Northwest threatened to precipitate a fresh Anglo-Spanish war, fears lest the British demand the right to use American territory in the old Northwest from which to attack St. Louis and invade Spanish Louisiana were accompanied by knowledge that there was no way of stopping them if they chose to seize the opportunity. Nootka Sound was a painful reminder that the United States might turn out to be only a nominal sovereign over the vast empire it had gained in 1783.

Many cautious steps had to be taken before American security could meet the standards set in 1776. Basic was the question of obtaining a firm grip on the Mississippi; without control of this stream the United States faced the danger of confinement to the Atlantic coast. Inseparable from this problem was the duty of the leaders to avoid running afoul of alliances which would bind American policy to purely European issues. Otherwise the United States would succumb permanently to the weaknesses of a satellite republic. The risks of this fate were already present in the terms of the French alliance, which committed the country to support French interests in America. Those interests continued active after 1783 and showed signs of amazing growth.

In reward for a strict neutrality which he followed under difficulties George Washington strengthened the position of his own country, especially with reference to the Mississippi; and the First President successfully appealed to the advantages of geography in cautioning his countrymen against involvement in purely European issues. So effective an instrument of security did Washington's program of neutrality prove to be, so contributory to the independence of the United States, that his advice became canonized. Neutrality, reaping the advantages of natural separation from Europe, became an important part of the American creed of security. But it was not the type of security which it was even then understood would remain static. Washington merely re-echoed what Hamilton had written in *The Federalist*: "The period is not far off," he declared, "when we may take such an attitude as will cause the neutrality we may at any time resolve upon to be scrupulously respected; when belligerent nations, under the impossibility of making acquisitions upon us, will not lightly hazard the giving us provocation, when we may choose peace or war, as *our interest*, guided by justice,

shall counsel." Like his Secretary of the Treasury, Washington framed his conception of American security in terms of a "rising empire"¹⁰

In fulfillment of this idea the United States accomplished the following during the first half-century of its independence (1) It threw off the obligations of the Alliance of 1778 with France (2) It conducted a diplomacy that not only insured the limited gains won by the treaty of 1783 with Britain but also acquired a vast empire west of the Mississippi. (3) It elbowed Spain none too gently from the Floridas. (4) It fought a second war for independence with Britain (5) Without resorting to the formality of declaring war, it fought France for the protection of American commerce And (6) it attacked the Barbary corsairs in the Mediterranean with the intention of shaking off the tribute which the latter had levied upon it in the past The formulation and working out of these accomplishments are narrated in the chapters below

At the end of the first fifty years the United States was so safe in its own continental domain that it was ready to redefine its security in terms of a still larger frame of reference—the exclusion of European influence from the Western Hemisphere The new definition was, to be sure, no stranger to the standards prescribed in 1776, indeed, it was but a reiteration in positive form of the doctrine of the two spheres In 1823 James Monroe hoped to clothe that doctrine with reality, so far as political embroilments with Europe were concerned. To this next chapter in the evolution of American security it is now necessary to give attention.

At the close of the war of 1812 there were two large areas that attracted American interest One was the trans-Mississippi West, including especially Texas and the Oregon country The fur trade of the Columbia River had long since identified the United States with the latter region, and by treaty with Great Britain in 1818 it was agreed to share the development with British subjects. Actually the treaty pre-empted the Pacific Northwest between the forty-second parallel on the south and the fifty-four-parallel on the north

¹⁰ The implications of the Farewell Address, whence the quoted sentence derives, are given appropriate attention in Part III The italics in the quotation are supplied Washington used the term "this rising empire" in a letter to John Adams, February 1, 1799, see *Washington* (Fitzpatrick ed.) XXXVII, 119-20 Credit for exploiting the phrase goes to A. B. Darling, who borrowed the term as the title for his book, *Our Rising Empire* (New Haven, 1940) Hamilton referred to "the unity of our Empire," which he said required the annexation of all territory east of the Mississippi. The term effectively describes the dynamic quality of the American security concept which an obscurantist isolationism tends to conceal

as a joint British-American preserve, to be divided between them at some time in the future. The agreement disregarded possible claims that Russia and Spain might make to the region. Three years later the Czar, prodded by the Russian-American company which operated from Alaska, issued a decree which closed the coast as far south as the fifty-first parallel, and the adjacent waters one hundred miles out to sea, to foreign vessels.¹¹ The challenge thus offered opened the door to possible trouble; nevertheless, the dispute was handled easily by negotiation and Russia ultimately agreed to retire north of the fifty-four-forty line. The occasion, however, gave the American government its opportunity to announce a sweeping policy against future colonization by European powers anywhere in the Western Hemisphere. Urged by his Secretary of State, John Quincy Adams, President Monroe in his annual message to Congress of December 2, 1823, declared "The American continents, by the free and independent condition which they have assumed and maintain, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European powers."¹² The assertion constituted the first item of the famous declaration of 1823, later to be canonized as the Monroe Doctrine.

Actually the noncolonization principle had scant relation to fact. The United States established its claims in the Pacific Northwest not by a simple presidential fiat but by treaties with the three other interested powers: with Britain in 1818, with Spain in 1819, and with Russia in 1824. A fourth agreement, the Anglo-Russian Treaty of 1825, completed the series. As a result of these treaties the entire Pacific Coast was divided. Spain retained title south of the forty-second parallel, Russia now owned outright a strip of coast north of fifty-four forty leading into Alaska, while the British and Americans remained competitors for the ultimate possession of the territory that lay between. This section between the Spanish domain on the south and the Russian on the north was Oregon. It was, to be sure, a vast, imperfectly explored wilderness; American contacts with it by land were slight; and in 1823 it was linked far more closely by a chain of trading posts with Hudson Bay than it was with the United States. Monroe's statement, in fact, gave free play to an ambition that proved realizable only in part. It voiced a sentiment already common to American opinion that North America

¹¹ It is worth recalling that the southern limit of the area that the Russians attempted to fence off lay two degrees to the north of the forty-ninth parallel, the line of division the Americans had already proposed to the British in vain.

¹² Richardson, *Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, II, 778

belonged to the United States. John Quincy Adams had asserted as much in 1819. The world, said he, must be "familiarized with the idea of considering our proper dominion to be the continent of North America. From the time when we became an independent people it was as much a law of nature that this should become our pretension as that the Mississippi should flow to the sea."¹² Thus ideas of security were inextricably related to those of "Manifest Destiny."

The realities of colonization continued to be for some years contrary to the sentiment of 1823. The British stuck to their right to colonize the northern half of North America, and the United States rested its security in that direction on a sound treaty system and a policy of good neighborliness, rather than on a loose generalization that, if literally pursued, spelled only trouble for the future. In the Caribbean area, too, colonization by private British subjects proceeded during the next score of years, and the United States eventually recognized British rights there by treaty. In 1845, James

¹² J. Q. Adams, *Memoirs*, IV, 438. In other words Monroe's warning to European powers not to colonize was in reality a veiled announcement that the United States intended to do so. And Adams immediately followed up the public statement with a secret negotiation in London in which he attempted to persuade the British government to agree to a tripartite division of the Pacific Northwest: the Americans to take up to the fifty-first parallel, the British to have the stretch of coast between the fifty-first and the fifty-fifth, and the Russians to be left in Alaska. Such an arrangement would give the Americans all of the good harbors and practically all of the land that was fit for settlement. Britain would have only a narrow strip of coast, where her trade would be at a disadvantage in competition with the Russians and the Americans, and doubtless Adams hoped that she would abandon the whole coast. But the British claim to the Northwest was very strong, and Adams' proposition was so inequitable as to draw an emphatic rejection.

Adams' sparring with Britain shows that the manifesto of 1823 was aimed principally at her and only secondarily at the Russians. The Pacific Northwest was a highly strategic area, and if the United States could get control of it, the interior as far east as Hudson Bay and Lake Superior would be of little value to the British. Thus Adams' dream of dominion over the continent would eventually come true.

There is a firmly rooted legend in American history that the Russian ukase of September 1821 was an act of aggression against the United States. This belief is naive, it is based on an uncritical acceptance of the assertions of John Quincy Adams. The contrary is nearer the truth: the ukase seems to have been a belated answer to the Anglo-American Convention of 1818, made without consultation with Russia. But the Russians had three permanent bases on the Northwest Coast, at Kodiak, Sitka, and Fort Ross respectively, and these seem to have met the contemporary definition of colonization. Russians operated along the coast without regard to boundary lines, just as did British and Americans. In 1810 the Czar had claimed dominion over the coast south of the Columbia River. Adams knew this—he was American minister to St. Petersburg at the time—and the ukase of 1821 could scarcely have surprised him.

See my articles, "New Viewpoints in the Relations of Canada and the United States," *Canadian Historical Review*, XXV (1944), 109-30, and "International Rivalries in the Pacific Northwest," *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, XLVI (1945), 185-218.

K. Polk, with eyes cast on the Mexican province of California, reaffirmed Monroe:

The reassertion of this [non-colonization] principle especially in reference to North America, is at this day but the promulgation of a policy which no European power should cherish the disposition to resist It should be distinctly announced to the world as our settled policy that no future European colony or dominion shall with our consent be planted or established on any part of the North American continent.

California, which Polk suspected the British of coveting, was a region which for more than a score of years had been within the range of American commercial and colonizing activity. Polk was about to subjugate it, and in the manner of Adams he invoked a warning to European powers in order to disguise his own aggressive intentions.

Meanwhile, the noncolonization principle had remained unimplemented. John Quincy Adams had aimed it partly at the system of commercial monopoly that was still common to European colonial empires in his day, and the Russian decree of 1821, which threatened American trading interests on the Northwest Coast, furnished a timely opportunity for laying down a general rule. The principle satisfied a need in that it served to discourage further European attempts at empire-building in North America such as had characterized the first three centuries after Columbus. But pragmatism, rather than theory, continued to influence the American government in shaping its policies, and the rule of noncolonization was not allowed to interfere with the normal processes of settlement and development on the part of foreign nations or individuals who held vested claims to portions of the continent. The security of the United States in its continental domain continued to be met by the practical tests of diplomacy, and, with few exceptions, American statesmanship proved equal to turning Monroe's principle to good account in the years to come. Actually it was used very sparingly, and sometimes even shelved. The chief exception was in 1895 when the United States intervened to checkmate a British colonial claim that gave the appearance of absorbing a liberal share of Venezuela. But even here the outcome of the intervention was to confirm the vested interests of the British settlers. And in 1916 the American government quietly assented to a Danish act of colonizing additional territory in Greenland. Precedent establishes that practical considerations, not theory, have determined the framework of American security.

Much more urgent in 1823 than the Russian threat to the Pacific Northwest were the issues raised by the widespread revolutions throughout Latin America. These had been in progress for more than a decade but until 1822 appeared uncertain to succeed; in that year, however, only Peru remained in the hands of Spanish troops. Commerce and a desire to see the new republics triumphant attracted the United States to their cause. Its realization fitted in with the conception of the two spheres which Jefferson had reiterated in 1808 when stating that the Latin Americans had a common interest with the United States in excluding "all European influence from this hemisphere." Jefferson had nevertheless concentrated on his quarrel with Britain over neutral rights and ignored an obvious opportunity to make common cause with Latin America. Meanwhile British trade and political contacts in the southern continent multiplied rapidly and the Latin Americans came to trust their future more to British hands. To the United States they paid less attention.

After the War of 1812 there was growing sentiment in the United States for bestowing official recognition on the insurgents. Henry Clay, the Kentuckian who had shown a zeal before the war for the conquest of both Canada and Spanish Florida, saw a fresh opportunity to emphasize the importance of an American political system separate from that of Europe. Clay, whose knowledge of Latin America was only casual, appears to have been influenced as much by his wish to make another gesture of isolation from Europe as by sympathy for the cause of the Spanish-American patriots. In March 1818 he tried to force the issue by means of a resolution in Congress creating an appropriation for a minister to Buenos Aires. But Mr. Monroe and his cabinet thought it wiser to make haste slowly: if the United States threw itself into the Latin-American *melée*, it would encourage a combination of France and Russia in support of Spain to oppose the formation of a republican front in the New World. In fact, the French and Russian envoys in Madrid, seeking to head off the United States, did devise a scheme for European mediation between Spain and her colonies.

The British also were favorable to mediation on the basis of the return of the colonies to their allegiance, provided that the Spaniards adopted a liberal commercial system and instituted other reforms. Certain differences in the views of Britain and the Continental powers prevented their collaboration: the British wanted free trade, and refused absolutely to countenance armed intervention on the Spanish side. When this became known through the congress of the European powers at Aix-la-Chapelle in 1818, Mr. Monroe

made an effort to get British support of the United States in recognizing the independence of the South American republics. But this, too, was not British policy: Great Britain, scarcely less than the Continental allies, frowned on the possibilities of a republican front that would isolate the New World from the Old. She wanted reform in Latin America, but preferred that Spain should remain in power. Castlereagh, the Foreign Secretary, laid great stress on the continuance of monarchy in the New World.

Thus rebuffed, the Monroe administration continued its silence on the issue of diplomatic recognition. Until it could be certain of the military outcome in Latin America, and as long as there seemed to be risk of a premature American action inciting an opposing combination in Europe, it resolved to avoid lending even moral encouragement to the Latin Americans. Not only this, but it persuaded Congress in 1818 to strengthen the neutrality laws so as to prevent the Spaniards from taking umbrage over the assistance given the insurgents by American privateers. Such coolness was sure to have its effect on Latin-American opinion, which turned more and more to Great Britain. By 1822 the military situation had cleared, but the political outlook was cloudy. Republicanism was losing ground steadily; in Brazil it had scarcely any foothold, and in Mexico it had been replaced for the time being by a native monarchy. Very cautiously the Monroe administration decided to act. If it let slip the opportunity for recognition this time, the President believed, the Spanish-American states would sink deeper under European influence. "I was aware," he told Madison, "that the recognition was not without dangers, but as either course had its dangers, I thought it best to expose ourselves after the accession of Mexico, and of Peru, to such as were incident to a generous and liberal policy."¹⁴ A public announcement of the intention to recognize five of the Spanish-American states—Argentina, Chile, Peru, Colombia, and Mexico—was made in March 1822; but it was decided to risk sending a minister only to monarchist Mexico. Monroe meant to avoid giving the impression abroad that he was seeking to organize a bloc of American republics against Europe.

When, however, the French precipitated matters a year later by invading Spain and suppressing the revolution in that country, the time had come for the United States to assume a bolder attitude. As seen from Washington, there were two underlying dangers. One was that Cuba might be seized by France, in the course of her subjugation of Spain, or by Britain as the price of her assistance to the

¹⁴ Monroe, *Writings*, VI, 285

Spanish liberals against the French. Britain, it was believed, would be forced to choose sides in order to preserve the balance of power in Europe against the French. But Cuba, as John Quincy Adams declared, had "an importance in the sum of our [American] national interests, with which that of no other foreign territory can be compared, and little inferior to that which binds the different members of this Union together"¹⁸ The United States would be obliged to fight in defense of the island against either France or Great Britain, though, as Adams privately admitted, there would be slight chance of its succeeding.

As for South America, Adams realized the possibilities of its slipping easily into the hands of France and Russia. He discounted the chances of armed invasion, but he was convinced that monarchist and Catholic influences in the southern continent would override the revolutions and align themselves with European governments. Consequently it was resolved to dispatch ministers at once to Buenos Aires and Colombia, the two most doubtful places in South America; through moral suasion the United States could thus add its weight to the success of the revolution. An austere New England Puritan with a proud sense of the contrasts between the United States and the Latin-American countries, John Quincy Adams was willing to concede that both had a common interest in republican institutions and in political and commercial independence from Europe. As for the Cuban problem, he advised the Spaniards that the United States would meet a British or French threat by encouraging a revolution in the island and a war for independence. Here it was especially necessary that he show his hand.

Meanwhile the victories of France below the Pyrenees and the open break between Great Britain and her former associates in the Quadruple Alliance brought further complications. George Canning, the new British Foreign Secretary, disliked the prospect of facing alone a solid Continental bloc that might decide on launching a thrust against Spanish America, accordingly he proposed to Richard Rush, the American minister in London, that the United States join with Great Britain in issuing a warning. The two countries, he also suggested, would pledge each other not to acquire territory for themselves at Spanish-American expense. Conditions counseled a quick decision, and Rush, who was seriously impressed, told the British Foreign Secretary he would subscribe to the proposed declaration on condition that Great Britain recognize the independence of the Latin-American republics. In the meantime, however, Canning lost interest

¹⁸ Adams, *Memoirs*, VI, 112, 138, Adams, *Writings* (Ford ed.), VII, 372

in the scheme. He had exacted from France an explicit disclaimer of any intention to appropriate for herself any of the Spanish colonies or of using arms against them in behalf of Spain, and he had no enthusiasm for co-operation with the United States. Great Britain, too, had a great stake in the Latin-American market, and considered that she had a prior claim on the right to influence Latin-American destinies. Canning privately admitted that Spain's chances of recovering her colonies were gone, but he shied away from encouraging republics. The British thoroughly disliked the system of which the United States was the leading example, and Canning had been prepared to make of Anglo-American co-operation a virtue only of necessity. As soon as he felt relieved of the French menace, he repudiated this co-operation.

Opinions differed in the United States as to what should be done. Rush's first messages from London, advising Monroe of Canning's desire for collaboration, induced the administration to give serious thought to the problem. If Great Britain really was alarmed over the menace of intervention, it was time for the United States to decide on a policy. Jefferson and Madison, whom Monroe first consulted, favored a common stand with Britain; it was an American issue, Jefferson contended, and the practical way to meet it, if it came to war, was to co-operate with the British. This course of action, however, shortly had to be rejected because the British themselves cooled toward the idea. John Quincy Adams, who opposed the joint stand with Britain even before he knew of Canning's change of heart, was especially eager to exploit the opportunity for a statement against further colonization of the American continents. He had always been skeptical of the European powers' interposing themselves in South America for the sake of Spain, and, though ignorant of Canning's warning to France, he doubted it now. If they intervened at all, he held, they would do so with the intention of partitioning the North American area among themselves. Britain would take Cuba, Russia would take California, and France would take Mexico. The United States would then be locked up east of the Mississippi. Or, if the Continental powers should co-operate with Spain and Britain opposed them single-handed, her superior sea power would probably decide the issue. The independence of the South Americans would then rest on her guaranty, which "would throw them completely into her arms, and in the result make them her colonies instead of those of Spain."¹⁶ Since each of these alternatives would injure the United States, Adams agreed with Monroe

¹⁶ Adams, *Memoirs*, VI, 208.

that now was the time for the American government to take a position.

The outcome of these cogitations, which progressed through November 1823, was as follows: (1) Monroe and his cabinet were impressed with the danger of war. Knowledge that French troops had occupied the Spanish port of Cadiz alarmed the President "far beyond anything that I could have conceived possible," recorded Adams. Calhoun, the Secretary of War, was "moonstruck"; and Adams, the coolest of the group, admitted that the issue presented a "fearful question." (2) It was agreed that Latin America held a peculiar relation to the United States. Adams stressed the power factor, the need for repelling possible attempts of European countries to recover territory in the Western Hemisphere. Jefferson, Madison, and particularly Monroe wished to make an affirmative statement in behalf of republicanism as a unique way of life. Madison urged that the statement be not limited to the Americas, since he, like many of his contemporaries, was attracted to the cause of Greek independence from the Turks. But Adams was opposed to even moral interference in the affairs of the Old World, and Jefferson and Monroe agreed. They all aimed at the exclusion of European political influence from the New World and, though traveling by somewhat different routes, they unanimously related this objective to the security of the United States. (3) Since a stand was to be taken, it should be assumed as quietly and as inoffensively as possible. The last thing the administration wanted was to incite antagonism abroad. Hence the choice was made of including the announcement in the President's annual message—a "fireside chat" to the American people, Calhoun called it. Furthermore, no steps were taken in preparation for war.

Very cautiously, but none the less explicitly, Monroe redefined American national security in terms of the whole Western Hemisphere. He used the traditional frame of reference, meaning that the two American continents constituted a new world, a sphere different from the old. The United States, he virtually said, would make war in defense of the independence of another American nation. "We owe it . . . to candor and to the amicable relations existing between the United States and those [European] powers," he wrote, "to declare that we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety." Any interposition in the affairs of those nations whose independence the United States has already recognized, he continued, could be regarded in no other light "than

as the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition toward the United States." But in the war between those nations and Spain the American government will remain neutral, he promised, "provided no change shall occur which, in the judgment of the competent authorities of this Government, shall make a corresponding change on the part of the United States indispensable to their security."¹⁷

Underlying these statements was the hope held in Washington that they would not be tested, that the European powers either could not or would not intervene in Latin America. Actually there was little danger of war; the Continental powers had formed no plan among themselves, and Great Britain had taken her stand against intervention; but there was a conviction, shared by Monroe and his associates, that then was the time for the United States to identify its interests with those of Latin America. It could do so independently of Great Britain. Monroe was not certain of the British position, however, and took pains to avoid the use of provocative language. Henry Clay showed some inclination to beat the drum by introducing a resolution in Congress endorsing the President's warning; but the resolution was sidetracked. The new definition of American security appears to have aroused no prolonged comment, and was accepted without much inquiry as to how it actually could be made good. The failure of a crisis to materialize no doubt explains the popular indifference.

This very question of how the United States would act against a European intervention was raised, however, by the Colombian government a few months later. Would the United States join an alliance? And would it consider as foreign interference the sending of Spanish troops against an American country at a time when Spain herself was under the heel of France? All that Secretary Adams would say in reply was that the United States would need an understanding with those European powers whose interests inclined them to co-operate to the same end. This was a sideward glance at Britain, upon whom the real defense of Latin America was sure to fall.

Monroe's words in fact were more than balanced by action from Great Britain. The United States appeared to be bidding in 1823 for the leadership of the American countries, but it did nothing then or for many years thereafter to advance this policy. No one in the Monroe administration contemplated the use of force except in the defense of Cuba, whose independence was not at issue; and it was not then a part of national policy to promote a league of American

¹⁷ Richardson, *op cit*, II, 787

republics headed by the United States. Mexico and Colombia tried to induce the American government to enter such a league on the basis of enforcing the noncolonization clause; but Adams, who as Monroe's successor in the presidency was called upon to implement the message of 1823, rejected the proposal. If the Latin-American states wanted to see noncolonization enforced, they would have to do it themselves so far as their own territory was concerned. The United States would pledge nothing beyond moral support. Adams hoped the Latin-American states would adopt parallel policies, and he accepted an invitation to the first Pan-American Congress in 1826 with this in mind. Otherwise the attitude of the United States remained negative and passive, in keeping with its position of relative weakness and insignificance in the international constellation. Britain, on the other hand, pursued the advantages she already held, with a view to winning commercial and moral ascendancy over the whole of Latin America. Canning used the Congress of 1826 as his sounding board, and his emissary, a man of shrewdness and foresight, achieved substantial success. For the next quarter of a century Great Britain was more nearly the mistress of the situation.

Monroe's message was a dynamic, though qualified, revival of the doctrine of the two spheres. The impression it made on the American mind, however, was only temporary. Once the ephemeral dangers of 1823 had disappeared, the frame of reference for American security contracted to the territorial fringes of the nation. South of Cuba the Caribbean stood neglected for twenty years, and to South America the United States remained largely oblivious for over half a century. Nothing that happened there shocked the American sense of safety or provided an incentive for claiming the moral headship from Great Britain. Even when the British in 1833 re-occupied the Falkland Islands, after sixty years of absence, the United States held its peace. Previous friction with Argentina over the freedom to use these islands in connection with the seal fisheries had made the American government ill-disposed to support the claims of the South American republic. The case is instructive because the Falkland archipelago lay on the flank of the vital trade route around Cape Horn, but, though the United States by this time had one of the most thriving and competitive merchant marines in the world, it left the lessons of sea power mainly to the British. It occupied no islands and contented itself with a small navy. Not less than the independence of Latin America, the safety of the long American trade routes which criss-crossed the oceans rested on

British good-will and on respect for the tradition of freedom of the seas

Occasionally, domestic strife, endangering the lives and property of British and French subjects, brought armed intervention by the two European powers in Latin America. This exercise of a police power by great states in the interests of their subjects was, to be sure, an established institution, but the nineteenth and twentieth centuries witnessed its extensive application throughout the world, and Latin America furnished some of the most striking precedents. Redress for personal injury and property damage formed the motive for such intervention; but success frequently depended on punitive measures, even the temporary occupation of territory, which impaired the independence of the republics concerned.

To cases of European intervention of this type in Latin America the United States took little exception throughout the nineteenth century. On the contrary, it incorporated the European practice into its own policy and applied it from time to time itself in defense of private rights. Instances of American intervention, entailing the use of naval forces, occurred in the Near East and in the region of eastern Asia. Like European governments, the United States assumed a practical attitude in applying its policies, interfering and making its voice heard only where some substantial American interest was to be served. By the close of the nineteenth century the prevalence of anarchy and misrule became so general among the petty states of the Caribbean as to incite armed interference at the hands of the several great powers. The case of Venezuela in 1902 sounded a warning of what might happen generally, and then for the first time the United States began to distrust European interventions in behalf of property rights as threats to its own security. Such measures, even if innocent in intention, might develop into prolonged periods of occupation and virtual colonization. The change in attitude was in keeping with the vastly enlarged range of national power, and especially with the superior position held by the United States in the Caribbean at the close of the Spanish-American War. The country now held a huge stake in this middle sea. the canal that was at last being cut across Panama made the Caribbean definitely into a vital passageway, with the safety of which there could be no trifling. Accordingly European governments were politely but firmly bowed from the scene, fiscal and political reforms were imposed on the offending republics by force, and in some measure claims and other grievances were redressed.

From this flowed two corollaries (1) "dollar diplomacy," rest-

ing on the belief that American security required not the Caribbean states alone but all Latin America to give up their banking relations with Europe and depend wholly on the United States for loans and investments; and (2) the conviction that the United States must assume the role of schoolmaster to the Latin Americans and see that they learned the political habits of English-speaking lands¹⁸. A basic assumption of national security had thus led to an efficient philosophy of imperialism. Measures in fulfillment thereof were adopted by the United States in the Caribbean during the first three decades of the twentieth century; good intentions, however, brought only indifferent success; and eventually various forces of resistance united in compelling the United States to reconsider ways of achieving security.

The central idea of American security is commonly compressed into one brief phrase: the Monroe Doctrine. The simplest definition of this term has come to be "hands off the Western Hemisphere." This, to be sure, is precisely what Mr. Monroe meant in 1823, though he was unconscious of expounding a doctrine and though it was not described as such until some score of years after he had said it. Furthermore, when we try to apply the Monroe Doctrine to later issues in American security, we at once encounter obstacles. We discover, for instance, the truth of the assertion of Charles Evans Hughes in 1923 that "the Monroe Doctrine as a particular declaration in no way exhausts American right or policy." Intervention in the troubled Caribbean was one such illustration, as Secretary Hughes himself declared. In other words, the American government refused to justify its policy in this area by the Monroe Doctrine, though it did not thereby repudiate or weaken the intervention policy. The fact remains, nevertheless, that intervention had arisen in the first place as the only insurance against European activity. We must bear in mind, therefore, that the Monroe Doctrine is by no means so self-explanatory as common belief assumes it to be, and that, on the other hand, it consists of certain generalized statements which are supposed to draw a line of demarcation around the Western Hemisphere in much the same arbitrary and immutable fashion as Pope Alexander VI divided the theoretical possessions of Spain and Portugal in 1494.

¹⁸ "Dollar diplomacy" was used also to describe the efforts of the American government to insure an equal share for American financiers in the international competition for loans in China. Popular usage restricts the term to the period between 1900 and 1920; but the techniques were used on a large and intensive scale by the Coolidge and Hoover administrations in getting American capital placed abroad, particularly in South America.

Space limitations make it impossible to verify completely the ideas thus expressed. In the case studies that follow, one may discern for himself whether the Doctrine is or is not involved in the various applied problems of American security. Clearly in a number of them there is no connection whatever, or if there is such a link it is remote and indirect. The Monroe Doctrine is neither the beginning nor the end of American conceptions of security. Furthermore, the reader will discover that, where it is involved even directly, there is room for difference of opinion and for a considerable range of interpretation. Essentially the problem is to fit the Monroe Doctrine into the general framework of American security, to treat it as only part of the whole, and to keep in mind Mr. Hughes's declaration in proof of the fact that there are justifications other than the Monroe Doctrine on which to base a line of policy which obviously concerns a Western Hemisphere area. Let us make the following points:

- 1 The President (or the Secretary of State speaking in his name) has the sole prerogative of giving the Doctrine authoritative definition or application. But it is exceptional for the Executive publicly to acknowledge the Doctrine by name, and it is extremely rare for this branch of the government deliberately to use the term in correspondence with another government as justification for a certain policy the United States is promoting. The notable exception was the declaration made by Richard Olney in 1895, and neither the tone in which Olney delivered his *obiter dictum* nor the controversy and ill-feeling that he excited both abroad and at home encouraged repetition. It is thus an all but invariable rule of American diplomacy, both before and since Olney, that in dealing with other governments discretion dictates omission of the Monroe Doctrine by name.

There have been four notable instances of Executive definition. Polk in 1845, Cleveland in 1895, Woodrow Wilson in 1913, and Wilson again in 1919. Each of these was in the form of a message to Congress or a public address, and each plainly was employed for the sake of emphasis. But each of these executives used the Doctrine in a different sense, even though the general field of application was the Western Hemisphere. Polk used it to underline his hostility to supposed British and French designs to colonize certain portions of North America which the United States had resolved to appropriate. Cleveland referred to the Doctrine as "public law," that is, a fixed principle which the United States had the legal right to define and enforce. Wilson endowed the phrase with moral fervor,

expounding it in terms of nonaggression by the United States against its neighbors and using it (with indifferent success) to attract friendship and confidence from the Latin-American states. Without consulting these neighbors, moreover, he had the phrase expressly written into the Covenant of the League of Nations, where it was described as a "regional understanding." Various Latin-American governments took the pains to deny the Doctrine this status; and Mexico, smarting from a recent invasion and other indignities visited upon her, angrily lashed out at the Doctrine as an attack upon her sovereignty and independence.

2. The meaning or the application of the Monroe Doctrine in any given situation is in the main a matter of public inference. Neither Congressmen nor the general public have the same reasons for modesty and self-restraint in the use of the phrase as does the Executive; and from time to time incidents or crises arise which give opportunity for free expressions of opinion on the subject. Although Congress has never attempted to "freeze" the Monroe Doctrine into the form of law, it can and does pass resolutions designed to support the Executive in implementing certain policies at certain times. Thus a resolution offered by Senator Lodge in 1912 warned a Japanese fishing company against acquiring rights at Magdalena Bay in Lower California; and in 1940 Congress underwrote a presidential warning already issued to France and Germany not to transfer the control of the French colonies in the West Indies. Neither of these resolutions referred specifically to the Monroe Doctrine; yet common opinion immediately identified each with it. Similarly, when President Roosevelt in 1938 promised the people of Canada that the United States would not stand idly by if they were threatened, publicists immediately characterized the statement as "an extension" of the Monroe Doctrine. The President himself, however, carefully refrained from making direct admissions to this effect.

As a living credo of national security, the Monroe Doctrine is really molded and interpreted more by public opinion than by official dicta. It is customary to associate certain well-known incidents of the past with it. Everyone agrees that Seward's pressure on the French to withdraw from Mexico in 1865-66, for instance, was an application of the Monroe Doctrine, though that cautious statesman was silent on the subject; and of course Olney's rash use of the phrase in 1895 leaves no room for doubt in connection with the Venezuela crisis. But what is not so well recognized is that the Monroe Doctrine has excited differences of opinion as to its meaning, and that sometimes the divergencies of view have been very great

and even heated. It was a question, for example, whether the important security agreement known as the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty of 1850, which related to the freedom of the Isthmian passageway, was in accord with the Monroe Doctrine. Determined partisans against the treaty used the phrase as an effective rabble rouser. Yet sober historical judgment must declare that this treaty was an important step in implementing the Monroe Doctrine. It gave the United States certain definite rights in an area which changing circumstances had suddenly made of primary interest. The Clayton-Bulwer Treaty was the footstool on which the United States rose to the position of paramount power in the inner Caribbean.

Analogously, though without the element of bitterness, during the 1930's the question was debated whether or not Pan-Americanism and the work of the Inter-American conferences had eclipsed the Monroe Doctrine or at least made it unnecessary. The chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations expressed his belief that they had, but subsequent events showed this judgment to be hasty. Secretary Hull "revived" the Doctrine by name in 1941 as justification for the American occupation of Greenland. Furthermore, the design of recent American diplomacy in relation to Latin America has been to implement the Monroe Doctrine by developing the machinery of conference and consultation with the Latin-American states. The sum total of these efforts was to bring the Monroe Doctrine by 1942 nearer than ever before to reality as a policy of hemispheric security. And it is certainly arguable that this method of approach was more truly in accord with the original principles of 1823 than the blatant pronouncements of Richard Olney. We need to remember the substance of Monroe's principles: independence and freedom of action for the United States with respect to excluding European powers from the American continents, and moral encouragement to the Latin Americans to do likewise. Experience has demonstrated Latin-American assent and co-operation to be a prerequisite. And the events of the Second World War present equally sound proof that military co-operation with Canada, the second most powerful nation in the Western Hemisphere, is needed in order to make the program workable for North America.

3. It is important to appraise the Monroe Doctrine as an attribute of American nationalism. The Doctrine is something fixed in the popular mind, as we have suggested, and arouses argument and debate, even passion and prejudice. There is no better illustration of this than the steps by which Monroe's message, after twenty years of neglect, became consecrated as a doctrine. The Western Demo-

crats first captured the phrase in 1843 and exploited it in connection with their demand for the whole of Oregon up to the fifty-four-forty line. Division of the territory with the British, they insisted, would be contrary to "Monroe's doctrine" of noncolonization. A more catching slogan than this was found, however, for the purposes of inflaming the public mind on the Oregon question, "Monroe's doctrine" was temporarily displaced by the aggressive cry "Fifty-four-forty or fight!", but the Democrats found it valuable stage property not long after in their campaign against the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty of 1850. The treaty had been made by the Whigs, who clearly regarded the phrase "Monroe Doctrine" as a piece of political blarney on the part of their opponents. Clayton, the Secretary of State who had negotiated the treaty, declared his disbelief in the Monroe Doctrine; and Seward, who later defended the treaty in the Senate, took pains to dissociate the treaty from the Doctrine. Coming from the Democrats, the term was used interchangeably with "manifest destiny" and, like it, implied a program of American aggression and conquest on the North American continent. After all, the "manifest destiny" men of the '50's were exhibiting the same tendency as John Quincy Adams in mentally appropriating the continent for the United States. Failure of the British to liquidate their interests in Central America according to the apparent meaning of the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty gave the "manifest destiny" Democrats their opportunity to exploit the Monroe Doctrine as a national fiat against foreign colonization. Senator Cass of Michigan introduced a resolution on the subject into the Senate in 1853, but failed to secure its passage.

The noncolonization principle gave spirit to the Monroe Doctrine. After the Civil War, partisan use of the phrase was displaced by a national preference for it. Henceforth the Monroe Doctrine was identified with the growing power of the United States. Seward's success against the French in Mexico reflected this, and thereafter the Doctrine was used with real effect. The rousing response to Richard Olney's utilization of the phrase shows how deeply it had burned its way into the living tissue of American nationalism. And Olney showed again how the Doctrine could be used with aggressive intent: he made it ground for a reckless claim of supremacy over the whole hemisphere. But once more the sequence demonstrated that this was not the road to peace and security. Actually the United States has won its present high position in the Western Hemisphere through a network of treaties and agreements which have compromised the literal terms of the Monroe Doctrine. In

substance the Doctrine has become a symbol of Good-Neighborhood and respect for treaties rather than of masterful supervision and control. Olney, its bluntest exponent, himself proved most reasonable when matters came to a test

4. The Monroe Doctrine is not really a single idea, to be attributed to Monroe, Adams, and their colleagues, but a nexus of ideas all of which bear directly on the question of how to protect the Western Hemisphere. We have already seen how the emphasis may vary, according to which hand the glove is to fit. The underlying aim is to preserve the status quo so far as European activity and interference are concerned.

Historically older than the Monroe Doctrine, but so close that the passage of time has made it indistinguishable, is the no-transfer principle. The British were the first to develop this idea; at the Peace of Utrecht in 1713 they pledged Spain not to alienate any of her territories in America to France or any other nation. The United States first used it in the form of a Congressional resolution in 1811 against the possible transfer of the Spanish Floridas to Britain; and the principle was made the focal point of American diplomacy designed to safeguard the status quo in Cuba. The process of welding no-transfer to the Monroe Doctrine was completed by the Grant administration in 1870.

As we have noted, American diplomacy has long made a practical distinction between the Caribbean and the rest of Latin America. It was particularly bent on preserving the status quo in the Caribbean islands. Prior to the Civil War this took the form of opposition to native insurrections. The United States was no friend to Cuban independence, lest it be cause for intervention by Britain or France. But the most embarrassing case was the actual independence of Haiti, which the blacks of that island won from France as early as 1804. Jefferson once described this Negro kingdom as a "young Algiers," and Monroe ignored its existence in 1823; there is in fact some reason for believing that the latter so worded his famous message as to leave Haiti out of account. At any rate, the Negro emperor who ruled there remained a thorn in the side of the United States until the Civil War. Recognition was withheld, and when it was found that France had no intention of reconquering her possession the United States leaned upon British and French agents in the island to maintain the status quo and look after American interests. It was a curious inversion of the Monroe Doctrine, but it accomplished its purpose.

Out in mid-Pacific the Hawaiian Islands came definitely within

the range of American security in 1842. There was a hint that the native kingdom would lose its independence and seek the protection of Britain, conscious of the strategic value of the Islands at the crossroads of the ocean, Daniel Webster asserted a "special interest" of the United States in their independence. Hawaii lay along the path of empire being blazed by American traders and missionaries toward the Orient, but it was also an important pendant to the Pacific Northwest coast, and a scene of intensive American colonizing and commercial activity. Its possible loss to another power was viewed from Washington with graver concern than contemporary European activity in Latin America, and the Islands were associated with the vital interest of the United States before it had annexed any part of the West Coast. The question of their integrity thus held a close affinity to the Monroe Doctrine.

5 The security of Hawaii opens up two additional inquiries which have an important bearing on the Monroe Doctrine. What is the Western Hemisphere? And in what relationship does it stand to the so-called Eastern Hemisphere, particularly with reference to the strategic links between the two? The mere matter of definition is important, because the ordinary connotation of the term "Western Hemisphere" has had an enormous influence in fixing in the American mind the doctrine of the two spheres. In turn the several concepts which are commonly classified as "isolationist" are rooted in the three-hundred-year-old belief that there are really two worlds, separate from each other. Common usage continues to identify the Western Hemisphere with the two "American continents," meaning the land mass, and to employ it interchangeably with the expression, "the Americas." James Monroe and Franklin D. Roosevelt were in complete agreement in this respect. Politically these phrases have served to contrast two different systems of government. In Monroe's time it was a case of republicanism versus monarchy; in Roosevelt's it was one of democracy versus dictatorship. Furthermore, the system of hemispheric solidarity constructed under the leadership of Mr. Roosevelt embraced an active association of all the American nations, including Canada, with a common interest in "hemispheric" defense.

The concept is subjective and political only, and has no bearing on scientific definition. There is no reason for supposing, for example, that Daniel Webster in 1842 thought of Hawaii as part of the Western Hemisphere. As already pointed out, the Islands were never embraced by the Monroe Doctrine; and it seems more likely that in Webster's time they were associated chiefly with the security of

American trade routes across the Pacific. Indeed, in 1898 opponents of their annexation invoked the Monroe Doctrine as a reason for not incorporating them—Hawaii did not then belong to the Western Hemisphere. And yet sea power and naval strategy have made it an essential appendage thereto.

Opinion at the time of Mr. Monroe seems to have included Greenland in this hemisphere simply because it lay close to the mainland. Yet the northeast coast of this island lies farther to the east than either Iceland or the Azores; naturally Monroe was not concerned with this geographic fact, because it had no bearing on the political questions of his day. Neither was he interested in the Aleutian Islands, which link Alaska with Kamchatka and the Kuriles, nor in the relation of the "bulge" of Brazil to the west coast of Africa. Monroe did not need to stretch his knowledge of strategy thus far.

So far as the scientific meaning of the term "Western Hemisphere" is concerned, and as pointed out by the geographer of the United States in 1940, map makers have no line of demarcation comparable to the Equator, which is a precise line between the northern and the southern hemispheres. The limits of the so-called Western Hemisphere, he said, "are defined neither by Nature nor by common agreement." And if a line through Greenwich were used, which is the one adopted by geographers, it would bring part of Iceland, the Azores, and the Cape Verde Islands inside on the east and part of Siberia, New Zealand, and all of Antarctica inside on the west.¹⁰ The practical point, of course, is that political and strategic considerations control the destinies of the Americas, not lines on the map, which are as theoretical as Pope Alexander VI's designation

¹⁰ See the highly important article, "This Hemisphere," with accompanying maps and diagrams, by S. W. Boggs, the official government geographer, in *The Department of State Bulletin*, XII, No. 306 (May 6, 1945), pp. 845-58. Hemispheres are determined according to their center, not according to some arbitrary location on the map. Therefore, the possible number of hemispheres is infinite. "You may order your hemispheres à la carte," remarks Mr. Boggs.

The expression "Western Hemisphere" has no geographical meaning whatsoever. It is merely a manner of speaking, and throughout this book it is never used in any other sense but this. The illusion that there is such an area as "the Western Hemisphere," and that the Monroe Doctrine defines its limits, is one of the great fallacies of American history. When the basic premise is an error, all that follows from it is likewise an error.

"This hemisphere, mapped by itself, induces complacency in Americans," continues Mr. Boggs. "It embraces almost the maximum area of ocean in any hemisphere which contains all of North and South America. Like an ostrich with its head in the sand, we avoid seeing the other half of the world, much of it surprisingly near." Inspection of the end cover maps in this book and of the map on pages 452-53 of the Northern Hemisphere will help to eradicate the false impression imbedded by the traditional schoolroom map of the "Western Hemisphere."

in 1494. The benevolent practice of naval power by Great Britain during the nineteenth century allowed American opinion the luxury of supposing that the Western Hemisphere was a different world. Correlatively, it should be pointed out, British sea power tolerated the extension of American trade routes around the globe. True, here and there the United States functioned independently beyond its own continental domain for the protection of its own interests, notably in East Asia. It adopted and promoted the system of international law identified with the state system of western Europe, and it occasionally used naval power to this end. But, generally speaking, the United States achieved its purpose without resorting to force.

We have seen that Monroe, like Alexander Hamilton and others of the founding period, made the doctrine of the two spheres their chief frame of reference. They projected a theory of hemispheric security, but the theory was not a condition except when related to British sea power. It was this very absence of sea power on the part of the United States throughout the nineteenth century that made Monroe's doctrine a political abstraction so far as South America was concerned. Americans generally remained indifferent to this fact until after the Spanish-American War. Alexander Hamilton had made the synthesis between sea power and hemispheric security in 1787, and had accurately forecast that the United States must first make its weight felt in the Caribbean. But except during short periods of war the country neglected its navy during the next hundred years. It grew deeply engrossed in the noncolonization feature of the Monroe Doctrine and was disposed to ignore or merely take for granted its assumptions respecting South America. In practice, noncolonization applied only to North America, where the United States enjoyed the advantage. Land power was the decisive factor here, except in the winning of California, where it was supplemented by sea power; and it became natural for Americans to endow the Monroe Doctrine with miraculous powers, especially after the French had left Mexico. By the time of Olney and Cleveland the Doctrine had assumed a quasi-sacred character: the United States had but to mention the Doctrine and its will would be done. It remained for Captain Mahan, in the 1890's, to renew the synthesis between sea power and the Monroe Doctrine and to state again the integrated theory of security expounded by Alexander Hamilton. Mahan drew attention mostly to the Pacific, but this did not prevent him from taking a critical view of the Monroe Doctrine or from casting side-long glances at the balance of power in Europe. Mahan is the chief

modern interpreter of the American concept of security as laid down implicitly by the founding fathers²⁰

Some four basic conclusions may now be suggested in answer to the main question, what the American concept of security is:

1 Obviously the concept is dynamic. It rests on the original conceptions of independence and freedom of action, as set forth in 1776, and it is given classic expression in the writings of Washington, Hamilton, John Adams, Jefferson, John Quincy Adams, and James Monroe. The first fifty years of the Republic were the determining period, during which the problem of security was the chief preoccupation. Indeed it was in many respects a question of national survival. A great world war was in progress, and inevitably the United States was the victim of a cross fire from the two powerful belligerents. Skillful management, qualified by a succession of blunders by Jefferson and Madison between 1806 and 1812, contributed enormously to the independence and prestige of the Republic. Monroe's message was an exhibition of confidence, a definite bid for the decisive voice in determining the destiny of the New World. It is an additional link between the concepts of security and manifest destiny.

Implicit in this dynamic pursuit of security is the record that American diplomacy has habitually set objectives that are not immediately realizable. Its conceptions have been powered by a sense of national greatness and a thirst for leadership. At no time has it been motivated by a simple desire to be "let alone"; on the contrary, it has been aggressive. Neutrality was developed by Washington and his successors as a means to an end, not an end in itself. In their hands it promoted national solidarity and reaped advantages in both territorial concessions and commerce on the high seas. It was discarded in 1812 under a theory of security, and war was substituted as an instrument of policy in humbling British power in North America and on the high seas. Not uncommonly the line between "security" and "manifest destiny," moreover, becomes so thin as to suggest a distinction without a difference. The advance into West

²⁰ It was Mahan who characterized the Monroe Doctrine as "a political abstraction." In 1900 he declared that "we can never again see with indifference, and with the same sense of security which characterized our past, a substantial, and still less a radical, change in the balance of power [in Europe]. The progress of the world has brought us to a period when it is well within the range of possibilities that the declension of a European state might immediately and directly endanger our own interests; might involve us in action, either to avert the catastrophe itself or to remedy its consequences" (Mahan, *The Problem of Asia*, p. 17). The facts began to catch up with this prophecy in less than twenty years.

Florida and Texas, for instance, seems to have been influenced more by the impulse to expand, nevertheless, the security motive was also at work; it was feared to take the risk of these provinces being annexed or converted into dependencies of Great Britain. In the process of American expansion a faint likeness to the Roman Empire in Europe and the British in India appears from time to time: frontiers had to be extended lest strong rivals get there first and use them to the nation's disadvantage.

2. The concept draws upon a complex fund of ideas bearing not only on independence and freedom of action in the Western Hemisphere but on freedom of the seas for American ships and commerce, protection of American life and property abroad, and the observance of treaties and international law among nations. These ideas are to be found at work in different parts of the world from an early time: in the Mediterranean Sea against the Barbary corsairs, in China and the islands of the western Pacific, and during a later period in the Caribbean and Latin America generally, which saw the classic application of an international police power by the United States.

The concept is isolationist only to the extent that it regards with indifference issues which are purely local to Europe; and it reserves for itself the right to determine when or at what point such questions, ceasing to be local, menace the interests or security of the United States. Both Washington and Monroe protected themselves carefully from the literal implications of the doctrine of the two spheres. Both were keenly observant of European politics and appreciative of the value of the balance of power for American security. Both distinguished between the *ordinary* and the *extraordinary* vicissitudes of European politics, and both of them had too much practical good sense to suggest any criterion for forming future judgments. Remembering the French alliance, and conscious of his own embarrassments as President in the face of French intrigues, Washington advised against *permanent* alliances; but mindful also of the practical contribution France had made to American independence the First President immediately qualified himself "Taking care always to keep ourselves by suitable establishments on a respectable defensive posture," he declared, "we may safely trust to temporary alliances for extraordinary emergencies." Jefferson, reputedly one of the most "isolationist" presidents, was prepared to adopt this expedient at least twice: once in 1803, when he visualized the possibility of the failure of his Louisiana Purchase diplomacy; and again, as we remember, in 1823, when he feared the pressure

of a European combination against Spanish America. In both instances Jefferson's choice of an ally fell naturally on Great Britain. With her on our side, as he wrote, "we need not fear the whole world."

With a few striking exceptions, as the arrangement of the case studies in Part I will disclose, the United States shifted the emphasis in its foreign policy from security to expansion for the balance of the century after 1823. But having successfully claimed the rank of great power by 1898, it was again beset by problems of security. It is accidental, but none the less interesting, that this second period of preoccupation with security, which has lasted from the Spanish-American War down to the present, is almost equivalent in length of time to the first period. Mahan, Wilson, and the two Roosevelts have been the chief spokesmen of the modern period; and, with circumstances vastly different, of course, the behavior pattern has not been dissimilar. There is nothing unique or alien to tradition in the official definition of American security offered in 1941. "An attack today," wrote President Franklin D. Roosevelt, "begins as soon as any base has been occupied from which our security is threatened. That base may be thousands of miles away from our own shores. The American Government must, of necessity, decide at which point any threat of attack against this hemisphere has begun; and to make their stand when that point has been reached."²¹

In the period since 1898 the underlying problem has been to check the development of vast aggregations of power on the farther side of the oceans which, when once out of hand, would undermine the position of the United States. Geography still weighed as it had in the time of Washington, and performed the same function in that it prescribed a lag between the beginning of danger overseas and the time when it became necessary for the United States to act. The new factor in American security after 1898 was the growing use of sea power by the United States itself, resting, just as Hamilton had foreseen, on the control of the Caribbean. But sea power in the hands of the United States was at no time so great that the nation could afford to overlook the "extraordinary vicissitudes" of European and at length also Asiatic politics: To frustrate Germany's lunges into world power, the United States supported the balance in the hands of Britain and France; to counter the Japanese, it befriended and promoted the nationalist movement in China. And it still recognized implicitly the function of British sea power in screen-

²¹ *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt* (1940 volume, New York, 1941), XXXI.

ing the Western Hemisphere. That function was performed just as it had been in the days of Nelson, not through superior tonnage in ships alone but also through the command of the bottlenecks which mark the exits from the European coasts. So long as Britain remained on guard over these, a hostile European movement against the Western Hemisphere was not practicable.

3. A third facet of the American concept of security is the tradition of peace with Great Britain. Judging by the frequent storms that characterized Anglo-American relations throughout the nineteenth century, the instinctive sense of rivalry between the two countries, and the malignant character of the opinions that were current about each country in the other, it is difficult to distinguish the tradition as such until after the Spanish-American War. At the time of Monroe, for instance, it seems to have been believed on both sides that the United States and Great Britain were fated to have war after war with each other. Henry Clay said as much; and Richard Rush, Monroe's minister in London, reported the same feeling prevalent in British society. The sentiment was no doubt grounded on the fact that the two were natural rivals on sea and on land. The United States was a claimant for the whole of North America, in a generous portion of which the British held vested interests, Britain, in her turn, had snatched the leadership of Latin America from the United States after 1823; and on the high seas, particularly in China waters, the merchant fleets of the two countries were competing sharply.

Despite these real sources of friction, and despite the chronic welling up of bitter feeling to the surface, no war actually developed between the two countries. Vested interests in commerce and finance, religion, and racial kinship polished off the roughest edges, and both nations shared the common inheritance of a deeply rooted respect for law and treaties. In the Western Hemisphere the British limited their territorial expansion (with very minor exceptions) to the process of colonization and development of the Dominion of Canada, and the United States repeatedly recognized in practice that its manifest destiny had limits. In Latin America Great Britain confined herself essentially to the expansion of private commercial interests, and paid full credit to the principle of territorial independence and political integrity of the local republics. The only offender against the principle was France under Napoleon III, and his adventure collapsed under its own weight. There is not the slightest evidence for assuming that Latin America, except for the United States and the Monroe Doctrine, would have been victimized by partition

and conquest at the hands of European powers. It has no common denominator with Africa, Asia, or Australasia, for example, which were the areas of European subjugation in the nineteenth century. The British displayed no taste for conquest in Latin America, and such political influence as they exercised was all in the direction of stable and orderly self-government. Finally in 1895 they conceded the political leadership of Latin America to the United States after a struggle that was limited to comparatively mild diplomatic argument.

The two empires were (and are) competitive, but not belligerent toward each other. In commerce they alike followed the principle of freedom of the seas, a principle which Britain had developed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries against the closed empires of Spain and Portugal. To this she added after 1846 the principle of free trade, and put it into operation in her own dependencies. This meant that no spot of ground under the British flag was closed to American commerce. John Quincy Adams in 1823, with the West Indies in mind, identified the British Empire with the old colonial system of commercial discrimination; but, even as he wrote, the bars were being taken down.

4. American ideas of security derive naturally from the American concept of the reign of law. Basically this is simply a projection into the field of international relations of the Anglo-Saxon principle of government by constitution. The United States Constitution expressly declares treaties made by the United States to be part of the supreme law of the land. The Monroe Doctrine, despite some sins committed in its name, remains firmly bound to principles of law and would employ force only as a last resort. The reference of disputes to arbitration and other recognized methods of peaceful settlement, common to American diplomacy, is a striking illustration of the national faith in legal processes. The United States gained experience and confidence in this field from the peaceful settlement of doubtful boundary and other questions with Great Britain. Repeated success with arbitration is a further sign of the nature of Anglo-American security concepts. The masterly reference of the "Alabama" claims dispute to an arbitral tribunal in 1870 was a great triumph for the reign of law, it took the edge from one of the most hotly passionate quarrels in the history of the relations of the two countries.

From this varied background there emerged in the twentieth century an Anglo-American-sponsored movement to vitalize international law by the development of a world-wide society of nations,

founded on the principle of mutual respect for law and orderly settlement. The movement appealed to sound political thinking in both Britain and the United States; British interests, already established on a global basis, were of course sensitive to the risks of local conflicts becoming general; after the Spanish-American War the United States too began to be alert to its far-flung opportunities abroad. Henceforth the United States inclined in the direction of an integrated system of world security, supported by three basic institutions: an expanding American sea power, solidarity with the British Empire, and an organized association of independent and sovereign nations.

There appear to have been three stages in the evolution of this concept of a unified world-security system. The first stage involved experiments with the Hague Arbitration system, adopted in 1899. Here the obligation on the part of any member was limited to voluntary arbitration. Furthermore, it was understood that recourse to arbitration was not to be expected in the case of the really vital problems that imperiled world peace at that time. States were exempted from jeopardizing their "vital interests" or "national honor" in the hands of an international body, and the Hague system fell with the outbreak of the war in 1914. On its ruins was erected an elaborate system of general international security aimed at substituting the reign of law for force in international relations. The arch of this system was the League of Nations, designed as a permanent framework of international government and equipped with elaborate machinery to protect the peace and security of every independent nation in the world, no matter how small or backward. The wartime co-operation between the United States and the Allied Powers, lasting barely a year and a half, furnished the only test of experience in the operation of this far-reaching institution. It contemplated a general reduction in armaments to a minimum level necessary for the exercise of a police power, the reformation of the economic system in the direction of free trade, and the application of moral, economic, and, as a last resort, military sanctions against a nation that substituted force for law. In a word, the basic assumption of the League system was that the security of one nation involved the security of all.

The successful operation of this system postulated three factors: solidarity in the defense policies and economic programs of Britain, France, and the United States, the admission of Germany as a law-abiding member; and the return of Russia to a position of influence among the nations. Anglo-French-American co-operation was the

keystone of the whole structure. For a complex variety of reasons, American opinion recoiled from the experiment and the United States backed away from the League. The practical effect of the American debacle was to entrust the peace structure once more to the balance of power in the hands of Britain and France. The war had so altered international conditions, however, as to make obsolete a system that had functioned with reasonable success in the nineteenth century. It is not surprising that statesmanship, much less public opinion in 1920, could not grasp this fact, only the fatal march of events during the next score of years was competent to establish it clearly.

The third stage in the evolution of a general security system commenced during the early 1930's. The pattern of world conquest then drawn by three predatory powers—Japan, Italy, and Germany—presaged the total collapse of the international order. The United States government harbored no illusions that this was any "ordinary vicissitude" of European politics, but it was hampered to the point of frustration by a stubborn public opinion dominated by the traditional conceptions of the nineteenth century. On the basis of moral condemnation of the aggressors, however, it was possible to build the foundations of a new and more practicable system of security. The United States strengthened its fences in Latin America, a field where the traditions of the Monroe Doctrine allowed it a free hand. It also manifested a clear drift in its general policies toward action parallel with that of Britain and France, and even showed an inclination to take the lead. But it remained for the overwhelming blow to France in 1940 and the consequent undermining of the position of Great Britain to sweep away the cobwebs of traditionalism. The United States was now faced clearly and decisively with the necessity of implementing a principle implicit in American foreign policy since 1776: that American independence and freedom of action cannot tolerate the existence of a predatory conqueror in control of the coastline of western Europe. It was the first time in the nation's history that the principle had been thoroughly challenged. Great Britain had regained control of the balance against Napoleon in 1815 and had kept it for a hundred years, in 1917 she had faltered but had soon regained it with the assistance of the United States; in 1940 it was clear beyond a doubt that the peace structure of the world could no longer be made to pivot upon her power. Short of a repudiation of the whole dynamic theory of security upon which the American nation had been founded, there could be no question of the necessary course of action. Practical

statesmanship supplied the immediate answer, and the overwhelming weight of public opinion concurred.²²

The pattern of a new, closely integrated system of collective security began to form in 1941, and its central concept was given expression in a short Declaration of the United Nations, signed at Washington on New Year's Day, 1942. As a war machine the United Nations functioned with brilliant success, under the leadership of the United States, the British Empire, and Soviet Russia. Mutual aid in food supplies, building materials, labor, weapons of war, and transport services, also the interchange of military information and co-operative employment of strategic bases, and the development of unified commands in the several theaters of operations marked the progress of the United Nations to the end of the war. Between the British Empire and the United States there was complete solidarity, even to the point where American diplomacy, in the interests of a quick victory in North Africa, made use of the treacherous anti-British French Admiral Darlan without consulting its ally. The incident was a real test of British loyalty, and under Mr. Churchill the test was successfully passed.

It was far more difficult to win the collaboration of Russia. The concept of unconditional surrender of the Axis nations was Anglo-American, but Russian consent was needed to give it definition. What policy would the Soviets hold toward Germany, their chief foe, after the latter's resistance had been broken? How would Russia react to the total defeat of Japan, proclaimed as a joint war aim by the two Western powers? And, with Germany and Japan destroyed, how would the war leave the future balance between the Anglo-American powers and the Soviet Union? There can be no doubt that the diplomatic activity that revolved around such issues as these was intense all through the war. Such little evidence of it as is available strongly supports the presumption that the Anglo-American powers eagerly and persistently sought Russian co-operation. The war was really a series of compound wars, the Soviet Union was at peace with Japan, and the Western powers thought it worth while to bring Russia in against her. Probably also they wanted to get advance commitments from Stalin with respect to his attitude toward postwar collaboration in Europe.

During the spring of 1943 the United States made unmistakable

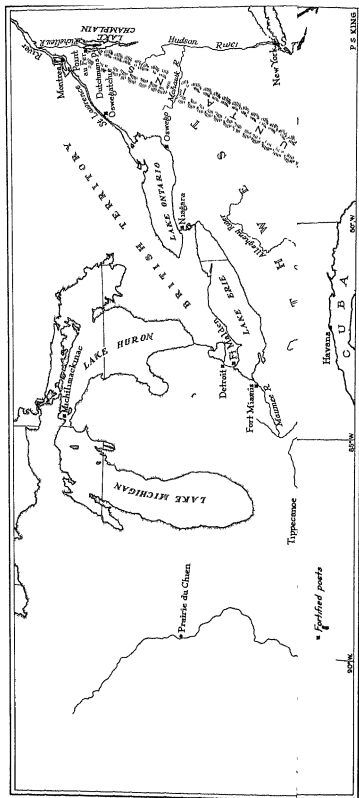
²² The complicated issues in American security since 1898 have been here compressed into a few pages for the sake of historical synthesis. Extended treatment is, of course, necessary, and the reader will find it in the appropriate case studies classified under "Hemisphere and Collective Security," chapters 21-27, pp. 218-481.

gestures in the direction of the land of the Soviets. A former ambassador, Mr. Joseph E. Davies, was especially commissioned to deliver a sealed letter from President Roosevelt to Mr. Stalin, and the results in May 1943 appeared to be decidedly encouraging. The Soviet government announced the dissolution of the Third Internationale, the agency through which it had at one time advanced the cause of Communism in foreign countries, and in other respects the United States and Great Britain were hailed from Moscow as allies in peace as well as in war. A three-power meeting of the foreign secretaries in Moscow in the following October made real gains. Russia subscribed to Anglo-American plans for the unconditional surrender of Germany and for the formation of a permanent United Nations organization. These beginnings were followed up by two important conferences among the heads of the three governments at Tehran in December 1943 and at Yalta in the Crimea in February 1945. These conferences were great landmarks in the winning of Soviet co-operation. Still it can hardly be doubted that Russia, in spite of the fact that the enemy had penetrated deep into her territory, remained in a better bargaining position than the Anglo-American powers, and that her leaders took full advantage of this. Britain and America could not win a decisive victory either in Europe or the Pacific without Russia, and they agreed to meet her price. The most striking evidence of this lay in concessions, made at Yalta, whereby Russia, in return for entering the war against Japan, would be given the Kurile Islands in the North Pacific. As a result of this agreement the Soviet Union recovered the position formerly held by the Czar as the principal power in that area²⁸. With or without Anglo-American concurrence there can be little question that this would have come to pass anyway.

In the meantime the Anglo-American powers continued their close mutual planning for a permanent network of international organization capable of facing the formidable problems in economic, financial, and social, as well as political reconstruction after the war. The calling of a great international conference at San Francisco in April 1945 and the completion of the United Nations Charter at that conference were only the most celebrated achievements in the field of collective security. Several subsidiary organizations, each highly important, were also set going.

²⁸ The Kuriles are barren islands extending northeastward from Japan proper to Kamchatka and inclosing the Sea of Okhotsk. With the United States certain to be an occupant of Japan, the Soviets would naturally be interested in the Kuriles. As an extension of the Japanese Archipelago the islands control the exits from the coast of Siberia.

In conclusion let it be said that the American concept of the reign of law in international relations, actively though fitfully pursued, points to the ultimate in theories of security. The Second World War was a decisive military victory; but it was decisive in an even greater sense in that it demonstrated the bankruptcy of separate national policies, each in its vain quest for peace and security. There was now no valid distinction between the security of one nation and that of others. How to develop a genuine collective system which would operate without recourse to war became the world's most urgent problem.



CONTINENTAL SECURITY

HISTORICALLY the continental security of the United States is a complex and varied problem. Never has it been separable from the shifting influences of the European balance of power. Originally it was a question of how to make the treaty boundaries of 1783 effective, unless this could be done, the independence granted in that year was certain to be only nominal. Solutions were eventually reached, but circumstances, both internal and external, continued to affect American security. The great sectional conflict which took shape in the mid-nineteenth century menaced the concept of the Union. Contemporaneously the country became alert to the dangers of political changes in the Caribbean. It was by means of the practical issues in this middle sea that ideas of continental security developed into the larger concept relating to the Western Hemisphere.

Meanwhile the defense of the northern half of North America remained exclusively a British and Canadian problem. It presented no difficulties, so far as Europe was concerned, until a conquering tyrant, Adolf Hitler, had made himself supreme on the European mainland. Then the United States awakened with a jolt to the perils to which the North American continent was exposed. Continental security immediately developed into a problem of partnership with the Dominion of Canada. But this soon clearly involved alliance with the British Empire and with other countries struggling against the onrushing German flood. The concept of American continental security was thus vitalized by connections extending far beyond the territorial limits of North America.

The historical problem of American continental security can be traced in the following instances: (1) The Old Northwest, 1783-1795; (2) The Old Southwest, 1783-1795; (3) Louisiana, 1800-1803; (4) The War of 1812 and the Peace of Ghent; (5) Arms Reduction on the Lakes: the Agreement of 1817; (6) Cuba's Role of Balance in the Caribbean, 1823-1848; (7) The Diplomacy of the American Civil War: the Issue of Confederate Independence; (8) The French Puppet Empire in Mexico, 1862-1867; (9) The De-

fense of North America, 1940-1945, (a) The Partnership with Canada, (b) The British Atlantic Island Bases; (c) The Occupation of Greenland and Iceland.

CHAPTER I

THE OLD NORTHWEST, 1783-1795

THE OLD NORTHWEST was the triangle of wilderness lands between the Ohio River and the Great Lakes. It was a hunting ground for numerous Indian tribes, and historically it was a part of the inland empire originally developed by the French and based upon the valley of the St. Lawrence. Scottish fur men at Montreal, the commercial capital of this vast wilderness, valued the total annual peltry at £200,000, of which nearly one-half came from the region south of the Lakes.

The treaty of peace between Great Britain and the United States in 1783 divided the inland empire roughly on an equal-share basis. The British retained exclusive possession of the St. Lawrence below the point where the forty-fifth parallel North latitude intersects it, and everything north of a line drawn from that point up the middle of the river and the Great Lakes and thence on to the "northwesternmost point" of the Lake of the Woods. From there it was intended to draw a line due west to the Mississippi on the assumption that the source of that stream lay to the north of the line. It was further expressly stipulated in the treaty that the navigation of the Mississippi should "for ever remain free and open" to the citizens of both countries from its source to the ocean.

Accurate cartography hindered the fulfillment of these last two requirements, ten years later the source of the Mississippi was found well south of the treaty line, the navigable portion extending only to the Falls of St. Anthony, near the site of the Twin Cities. This left a boundary gap of 175 miles by air line between the Lake of the Woods and the river source. Moreover, in order to carry out the intent of the treaty it would have been necessary to agree on a V-shaped boundary beyond the Lake of the Woods so as to put the Falls of St. Anthony in British territory. Without this rectification the free navigation article of the Treaty of 1783 could not be made to operate. Naturally it became an object of British diplomacy after

1793 to procure such rectification. British creditors and traders were in the meantime most active in opening up this part of the country, and accounted for an additional £40,000 worth of furs annually pouring into Montreal.

Meanwhile it was uncertain whether or not the United States could take up its position at the treaty line at all. Command of the region was contingent upon the possession of a number of trading posts strung along the south shores of the Great Lakes from the eastern end of Ontario to Michilimackinac, near the upper end of Lake Huron. In addition, there were two other posts on Lake Champlain and one on the south bank of the St. Lawrence, inside the American treaty line; these posts were under the jurisdiction of the governor of Quebec, and garrisons were maintained at them. The Canadians, especially the Montreal fur merchants, were thunderstruck by a treaty which sacrificed an empire built up by them and naturally tributary to the St. Lawrence. They needed time to wind up their business affairs south of the Lakes, and the governor was determined to support them. The Americans expected a quick transfer of the posts, but the British governor estimated that three years would elapse before the change in jurisdiction could be completed. As viewed from Quebec, an even graver issue than the interests of the fur merchants was the almost certain anger of the Indians if the Americans, whom they had been fighting, should suddenly be placed in charge of the posts. Both British and Americans would be courting an uprising reminiscent of Pontiac's Conspiracy. Principally for this reason, Governor Haldimand pleaded for delay, and declared his own belief that the Indians ought to be left in possession of their lands indefinitely, with British and Americans having equal rights of trade with the tribes.

The authorities in London in consequence declined to surrender the posts "with all convenient speed" as the treaty of peace had prescribed. They were also not slow in discovering that the United States was not carrying out its part of the terms of the peace, especially in the matter of indemnifying Loyalists and protecting them when they returned to reclaim their property. Congress, it is true, had fulfilled its part, having "earnestly recommended" to the several states that they carry out the spirit of the treaty; but none of them did so. Loyalists who dared to return to their estates took their lives in their hands. Furthermore, it proved impossible for British creditors to collect debts owed them in America since before the Revolution. Here again the effectiveness of the peace treaty depended on the attitude of the state legislatures and the state courts, which

refused to deal out even-handed justice. Resentment over these American shortcomings led the British government to the decision to keep the posts in the Northwest indefinitely, especially since it seemed highly probable that the United States would disintegrate. John Adams was told in 1786 that the only way to get the posts was for the United States to enforce the treaty. It was an unanswerable argument, among many, for the creation of a strong central government, and men like Adams and John Jay saw the point. By 1793 the new Federal courts, set up under the Constitution, were beginning to demonstrate their fearlessness of local state prejudice by pronouncing judgment in favor of British creditors, and the prospects of at length securing the posts brightened accordingly.

Meanwhile, however, peaceful penetration of the Old Northwest by Americans was out of the question; the Indian tribes, ably captained by the Mohawk chieftain, Joseph Brant, barred the way. Settlement got no farther by 1788 than the mouth of the Muskingum River, and two attempts to blast the hostile redskins aside met with complete disaster. General St. Clair, commanding a Federal army, lost nine hundred men in November 1791. It was the worst rout at the hands of the tribes since the defeat of Braddock. St. Clair had got as far as the Miami River in southwestern Ohio, whence he hoped to build a line of blockhouses across country to the Maumee and eventually to hem in the Indians. But as long as the Lake posts remained in British hands, the chances of American success were slim; the posts not only supported the inland fur trade but also kept the tribes supplied with guns, powder and ball, blankets, and war paint. Against substantial reinforcement of this kind it was hoped in Canada that American military power would ultimately falter. The United States would thus shrink to the Ohio River, and if Spanish pressure from the Southwest proved equally successful it would be forced back even farther.

The region of Lake Champlain was also a zone of weakness. Though the Green Mountain Boys of Vermont, led by the Allen brothers, had fought for the Revolution, they now made a bid for union with Canada. The sole outlet for their timber, grain, and pork products was the lake-and-river route northward to Quebec. The Treaty of 1783 put them inside the American line, but the Vermonters reinforced with Loyalist immigrants from the St. Lawrence, maintained themselves as a "republic." The Allen brothers tried to extract a free-trade agreement from the authorities in Quebec, and like Wilkinson in Kentucky were ready to promise to detach Vermont from the United States. The British continued occupation

of the two trading posts on Lake Champlain but displayed no sign of eagerness to accept the offer. Ira Allen even went to London in 1789 to put his proposition before the British government, but it appears that the only interest the latter had was in the safety of the trading posts. Through its agent in Philadelphia, Colonel Beckwith, that government was apprised that the United States would not make war to recover the posts, and it accordingly rejected the Vermonter's overture. Vermont separatism is not a part of the problem of the Old Northwest proper, but it was symptomatic of a general tendency for the United States to break along the edges during that decade and must have helped confirm the British belief that American independence need not be taken too seriously. Admission of Vermont to statehood in 1791 strengthened the American position, just as did that of Kentucky the same year, but the trading posts on Lake Champlain continued in British hands.

St. Clair's defeat on the Miami in November 1791 furnished the British the opportunity for which they had been waiting. Far from being ready to transfer the Northwest posts, they adopted a plan advocated by Lord Dorchester, the governor-general of Canada, to create a neutral Indian barrier state on the south side of the Lakes. This would embrace all of the Old Northwest and as much of the territory as possible through western New York at least as far east as Lake Champlain. White settlements in this region would be forbidden, and the British would relinquish their posts in favor of the Indians. But traders of both nations might penetrate the country at will, and the British relied on their Indian Department and the superiority of their long-established connections with the tribes to outdistance the Americans in any competition the latter might seek to offer.

Lord Dorchester's plan was designed to insure a bright future for the fur empire of the St. Lawrence. It would meet the fondest wishes of the Indians and keep the Old Northwest permanently tributary to Montreal. It would have the added advantage of pressing the United States to the south and east of the Ohio and of buttressing the Canadas against any possible American invasion in the future. Some Canadian authorities, like Lieutenant Governor Simcoe of Upper Canada, remembered the invasions of Arnold and Montgomery in 1775-76 and feared the United States might try again at some future date.¹

¹ Simcoe, however, was no friend of the fur trade. He looked upon his colony as the nucleus for a new inland empire of commerce and agriculture, drawing off the trade of the Great Lakes and the Ohio and making of the interior a vast

The British authorities found hope for the acceptability of this scheme in the foreknowledge that Alexander Hamilton, so influential with President Washington, was eager for a thorough understanding with Great Britain on the basis of commerce and an alliance against Spain. Hamilton felt that the Northwest posts could wait; moreover, he was willing to rectify the boundary line in the extreme northwest in order to give the British direct access to the Mississippi. George Hammond, the youthful British minister in Philadelphia, it was hoped, could gain the ear of the Secretary of the Treasury and propose the barrier-state plan in the guise of an offer to mediate between the United States and the tribes. Hammond sketched the plan for the edification of both Hamilton and Jefferson, but knew full well that it stood not the slightest chance of consideration. The suggestion that the British government be permitted to mediate at all between the United States and the tribes which, as Hamilton expressed it, were subjects of the United States offended American sensibilities.

Much more serious than the paper plan for a barrier state were the renewed aggressions of British agents in the Northwest, particularly in the spring of 1794. At the instance of Lord Dorchester, Simcoe sent a force to the rapids of the Maumee, forty miles deep into American territory. Both men were expecting war, and they planned this operation as a flanking movement to protect the British route on Lake Erie. Simcoe built and garrisoned his fort, while an American army under General Wayne was marching north to make war on the Indians. Wayne retrieved the disaster of 1791. At Fallen Timbers on August 20, 1794, almost within sight of the British blockhouse, he fell upon and scattered the redskins. Wayne might have followed with an attack on the British force, but he appreciated the responsibility of such an act and restrained himself. At no time did the administration of President Washington plan to drive the British from the Northwest posts by force. It felt its inability to do so, and realized the risk of heavy loss it would most surely incur elsewhere through retaliation. It was vital for the preservation of American national independence that the United States refrain from all hostilities, however justified, against any European power at that

tributary to the St. Lawrence. To these ends he scoffed at the prospects of the American Republic, encouraged Americans to come to Canada to settle, and contrived the plan for an Indian barrier state that would block the roads from the seaboard to the Old Northwest. Fred Landon, *Western Ontario and the American Frontier* (Toronto and New Haven, 1941), pp. 12-45. See also Richard W. Van Alstyne, "New Viewpoints in the Relations of Canada and the United States," *Canadian Historical Review*, XXV (1944), 117.

time—better to sacrifice the distant posts than to engage in war with a major power when the country was weak, virtually helpless, and not even domestically united

The Washington administration had to make its way cautiously. The Northwest was by no means its only concern. Besides experiencing great anxiety over the future of the Southwest and the Spanish grip on the Mississippi, and also difficulties with the French, who felt they had a right to use American soil for intrigue and warlike expeditions against both Britain and Spain, it faced the risk of deep involvement with the British over questions of the rights of shipping on the high seas. A single false step that would plunge the country into war with either Great Britain or France would have led the new nation not to victory but to the grave. This indubitably is the explanation of the rigid neutrality practiced by Washington in the trying years 1793 to 1796.

In the next chapter we shall examine the outstanding success Washington had with Spain and France. Careful diplomacy, reinforced with the cheerful news of Wayne's triumph over the Indians, also bore its reward for the future of the Old Northwest. In May 1794, John Jay, the chief justice, was sent to England to see if a general agreement could be had over the several questions affecting American relations with that country. It was worth while for the British government to respect the honest efforts of Washington and to refrain from forcing the United States into the arms of Britain's enemy, France. In lieu of the Northwest posts, the evacuation of which he demanded, Jay proposed to Grenville, the British foreign secretary, security for the Canadian fur merchants in the form of a reciprocal agreement whereby the nationals of the two countries might pass freely across the frontier. This assured the Canadian traders the continuation of their business to the south of the Lakes until such a time as trapping would be compelled to give way to agriculture. It was a form of security that Jefferson had offered Hammond in 1791 but to which the British government had then turned a deaf ear. The Canadian fur men had now voiced their willingness to accept it as a last resort, and the London government was no longer interested in the ambitious plans of Dorchester and Simcoe. Consequently Grenville and Jay reached an agreement on the evacuation of the posts to take place not later than July 1, 1796.

This undertaking, which was carried out to the letter, removed forever the cloud of British control over the country that had been legally American soil since 1783. It did not, of course, immediately affect the Canadian monopoly of the fur business, which had po-

litical implications in the Old Northwest. That was allowed to run its course until 1812. Moreover, a far-reaching proposal for the additional security of the Northwest frontier, originally set forth by Hamilton and Jefferson in 1791 and repeated by Jay in 1794, met with scant approval in London. This was to pledge mutual restriction of armaments on the Great Lakes. It was a type of border security that was novel, and against the background of existing distrust it had to await the more favorable atmosphere of a later day.

There was one other limitation to the complete security achieved by Mr Jay's treaty for the Old Northwest. Jay and Grenville could not agree on a line which would close the gap in the extreme northwest. Instead the treaty reiterated the original stipulation of 1783 that the Mississippi was to be open for navigation to the citizens of both powers and provided for the setting up of a mixed boundary commission to fix a line subsequently. This commission never met, in truth, it was impossible to fix a line that would both insure British subjects use of the river and protect the United States against serious loss of its territory. Proposals for a settlement were made from time to time but without bearing fruit until the great Treaty of 1818, which extended the boundary from the Lake of the Woods along the forty-ninth parallel as far as the Rocky Mountains; thus put the Mississippi altogether inside the United States.

The Jay treaty of November 19, 1794, bitterly vilified by the populace in the United States at the time, was a powerful instrument of American security. It signalized the tentative yet firm gains won by the diplomacy for which the Washington administration has long since become celebrated. Security for the Old Northwest was but a part of the triumph of John Jay. A working compromise was reached with the British government for the treatment of American shipping on the high seas. And the Jay Treaty opened up the road to an agreement with Spain of similar importance for the security of the Old Southwest. Verily the Jay Treaty was a major landmark in the independence and security of the United States.

CHAPTER 2

THE OLD SOUTHWEST, 1783-1795

BY THE TREATY OF PEACE OF 1783 Great Britain recognized the independence of the United States and conceded the following: as already stated, the right to navigate, jointly with British subjects, the Mississippi River from its source to the ocean and a western boundary at the Mississippi, also a southern boundary extending along the thirty-first parallel north latitude between the Mississippi and the Appalachian rivers and thence eastward irregularly to the mouth of the St. Mary's River on the Atlantic. Huge as was its expanse, far exceeding that achieved by actual American military victory, the United States could by no means anticipate an unclouded future. Its well-known lack of domestic unity after the war need not be demonstrated here. This and its insecure position on all four frontiers made its political independence of questionable validity. The Atlantic trade routes and the maritime approaches to the North American continent were, of course, in the hands of British sea power, the St. Lawrence waterway, which pierced the continent on the north, remained exclusively British, the Spanish Empire, restored to some of its ancient vigor by military victories over the British, controlled the Gulf of Mexico, at least for the time being, and, by getting back the Floridas, controlled the strategic points on the coast from the St. Mary's River (the traditional boundary of Georgia) on the Atlantic side to the Mississippi and beyond. This barred the United States effectively from the entire Gulf of Mexico littoral and neutralized the clause in the peace treaty opening the Mississippi to navigation.

Everything south of the thirty-first parallel, that is, the lower 312 miles of the Mississippi River, including the town of New Orleans, was admittedly Spanish. From the standpoint of possession Spain was now in an excellent position to seal her Caribbean and Gulf empire against foreign intercourse and thus revive her former system of colonial monopoly. One of the first steps taken in this direction was the formal closing of the Mississippi in June 1784, placing the United States immediately in a weaker position than it had previously enjoyed as a British dependency; for, before the Revolution, Great Britain had controlled both of the Floridas and the Mississippi was free to all British subjects.

In 1783 the United States was thus really wedged between the British and the Spanish empires, the British occupying the land fringe on the north, including the all-important St. Lawrence gateway to the interior, and the Spanish holding the southeast and southwest, including the Mississippi gateway. The great and virtually unoccupied area west of the river, known as Louisiana, also was Spanish. These were the formal cartographical limitations upon the independent position of this country. The real limitations were still more serious.

The security problem involved the whole West—everything between the Great Lakes and the Spanish boundary. We may, however, confine discussion to the region known as the Old Southwest, the country from the Ohio River southward to the Spanish Floridas. In this direction American security was in the main conditioned by the position, strength, and aggressiveness of the Spaniards. The closing of the Mississippi to navigation was one extremely serious blow because the pioneer American communities of the West estimated their future almost entirely in terms of the river outlets. The Allegheny Mountains to the east were considered an insuperable barrier to profitable business in the West, which looked to the river as its great highway to the outside world. If the latter should be blocked, the American West would be stunted before it emerged from the infant stage.

But there was another equally serious aspect of this question. The southern boundary at the thirty-first parallel, as defined in the British treaty, was only a paper boundary which had not even legal validity when it came to dealing with Spain. Between the latter power and Great Britain a separate treaty of peace was signed in which no mention was made of the boundary of the two Floridas. It must be kept in mind that this extremely strategic country had for twenty years been a part of the British Empire in North America. That put the British in position to pierce the continent by means of both the great inland waterways—the St. Lawrence–Great Lakes system on the northeast, and the Mississippi and its tributaries on the south. It also drove a wedge into the heart of the Spanish colonial empire of the Caribbean. The United States lacked this tremendous advantage in 1783—it was barred from the coast.

For administrative purposes the British authorities had divided the Floridas into two provinces, east and west, the line between them being the Perdido River. The northern boundary of British West Florida began at the intersection of the Mississippi and Yazoo rivers, well to the north of the thirty-first parallel. Naturally the

Spaniards, in taking back the Floridas in 1783, considered the boundary accordingly. The resulting loss of territory by the United States was large, though not immediately important, because all of the Florida hinterland was at the time occupied by organized Indian tribes. The strategic loss was even greater: the line at the Yazoo ($32^{\circ} 28'$, to be exact) gave the Spaniards command of Natchez and Walnut Hills (Vicksburg), vital points of control on the river. From Natchez one could march east into the Indian country and reach the sources of the Tombigbee, the Appalachicola, and other navigable streams very important to the development of the interior; from Walnut Hills the Yazoo Valley and a long stretch of the Mississippi to the north could be dominated. Obviously from the standpoint of position the Spaniards in 1783 had everything to be desired. The degree of their underlying vitality and their spirit of initiative remain to be examined.

On its part the American Southwest comprised four distinct and widely scattered groups of settlements. Kentucky, on the south bank of the Ohio, western Tennessee, in the valley of the Cumberland River; eastern Tennessee along the Holston River, for a brief time organized as the independent "State of Franklin", and Georgia, between the Savannah River on the north and the St. Mary's to the south. In mere numbers of people the American settlements outstripped the Spanish Floridas by three to one, even in 1785. But their isolation and lack of unity, both among themselves and with respect to the general government in Philadelphia, put beyond the capacity of the United States effective military occupation of the Southwest, much less an expedition to compel the Spaniards to recognize the line of the thirty-first parallel.

In addition to actual settlement many Americans, both frontiersmen and Eastern capitalists, were involved in Western land speculation. One group from South Carolina and Georgia was interested in the Yazoo country. Another group from North Carolina and the Cumberland settlements wanted to open up the land around Chickasaw Bluffs (Memphis) and Walnut Hills on the Mississippi. A third colonization project was initiated in North Carolina to develop Muscle Shoals on the Tennessee. Land-development schemes were the great business of the American West even at that time; but the prospects of success were contingent upon the use of the river outlets and upon good relations with the Indians.

Four large tribes occupied the land between the Tennessee and the Florida settlements: the Chickasaw in the northwest corner, between the Tennessee and Mississippi rivers, the Choctaw to the

south of them, in the country east of Natchez, the Creek in the valleys of the Alabama and the Appalachicola; and the Cherokee on the upper Tennessee, closest to the American settlements on the Holston. American relations with the tribes were weakened by competitive negotiation on the part of the general government, the states, and even private groups. Sometimes the competition for agreements with the tribes fell just short of open hostility. Generally speaking, the Spaniards had no difficulty in thwarting their American rivals and brought all but the Cherokee under their sway as early as 1784.

Of decisive influence among all the Indians of the Southwest was Alexander McGillivray, the Scotch half-breed leader of the Creek, who lived like a planter and never himself participated in fighting. By a secret article of a treaty in 1790, the United States made him a brigadier general with the pay of \$1,200 a year; it also promised smaller subsidies to the other chiefs. But McGillivray, in spite of the promises of friendship he gave in return, was really the ally of the Scotch trading firm of Pantón, Leslie & Company, which controlled the trade of the Floridas. Though British, this firm survived the war and at least partly through McGillivray's influence was permitted to remain with its full trading privileges under the Spanish colonial regime. For many years it continued to monopolize the trade of the Spanish Floridas and to furnish the Indians with British-made blankets, guns, tools, and even war paint. Thus the firm's alliance with McGillivray worked to their mutual advantage and made it a potent factor in developing a barrier against the Americans. McGillivray wished to build up an Indian confederation that would force the Americans back to the Ohio River. The Spaniards on their part were cautious. They delayed extending their fortifications up the river after the war, but instead chose to initiate negotiations themselves with the United States on the boundary issue. Apparently they doubted their ability at this time to build forts up the Mississippi as a means of keeping the Americans away. They resorted to this method only later.

The Spanish envoy was Don Diego de Gardoqui, the son of a mercantile house of Bilbao which had been involved in the contraband trade between Spain and America during the Revolution. Don Diego himself had had personal knowledge and experience in American negotiations in connection with John Jay's mission to Madrid in quest of a Spanish alliance. In 1785 he found John Jay in charge of foreign affairs for the Continental Congress at New York. His instructions were the joint product of the Spanish Foreign Minister,

Floridablanca, of Josef de Galvez, the competent Minister for the Indies, and of the latter's nephew, Bernardo de Galvez, who had won Florida from the British and knew the strategic situation on the Mississippi. Gardoqui was to conclude an alliance with the United States on the basis of an agreement on the boundary issue, a mutual guaranty of each other's dominions in North America, and commercial reciprocity. The boundary might be drawn eastward from a point anywhere between the Ohio and the Yazoo but in no circumstances south of the latter, and no compromise was to be permitted on the question of the use of the river. With such a treaty in hand Spain would be protected in realizing one of the principal objects for which she had entered the war in 1779—the reconquest and exclusive exploitation of a great Gulf empire pivoting on Havana, Cuba, and the Gulf ports

Gardoqui relied for success on his personal powers of persuasion with Jay and other key leaders of the American Confederation and on the genuine need of the Northern states for a commercial treaty. Spain was one of the most important outlets for Northern flour, dried fish, and lumber; on the other hand, the Mississippi question and the western boundary were remote issues apparently unrelated to the need of the Atlantic seaboard. Jay estimated it would be twenty-five or thirty years before the United States would really need to exercise the right of navigation, and he hesitated between making the Mississippi question the *sine qua non* and relinquishing it in favor of a reciprocity treaty. It was understood by both parties that an agreement on a mutual territorial guaranty would emerge in any event. Jay's own proposed compromise was that the United States should waive its claim to navigation for a period of thirty years and negotiate a boundary line at the mouth of the Yazoo. By the end of the thirty years, he thought, the United States would be able to seize the advantage strategically from Spain by virtue of its probably larger population. At the time, however, he felt that this country, on the threshold of a political breakdown internally, had slight chance of winning an agreement with Spain without this sacrifice. As a Northern man who valued the direct trade with Peninsular Spain, he reached the conclusion that a treaty was worth the sacrifice.

So did the delegates from the seven Northern states in the Continental Congress of 1786. By a bare majority vote Jay was authorized to proceed with Gardoqui along these lines. No results ensued, however, for the Southern delegates, aroused by James Monroe, opposed the prospective agreement *en bloc*. The approval

of a treaty under the Articles of Confederation required a vote of nine states out of the thirteen, and to make sure of this the delegates of at least two Southern states had to be won over. Gardoqui tried his hand at personal intrigue, even presenting a blooded Spanish jackass to General Washington, but made no substantial headway. Washington himself was one of a number of honest men of the seaboard who questioned the immediate importance of the Mississippi. His own solution for the Western problem was a canal which would connect the Ohio River with the Potomac and thus bind Western and Eastern interests directly together.

The river question was the stumbling block of the Jay-Gardoqui negotiations. The Spaniard was allowed no compromise by his government on this point. The old Congress of the Confederation on its part voted to leave the question to the new federal government, and Gardoqui finally left the country empty-handed. Four years of fruitless negotiation convinced him that sectional jealousy, which had frustrated his treaty plans, would continue to paralyze American action and thus function as a sufficient safeguard for the Spanish possessions in the Southwest. What he totally miscalculated was the unifying influence of the new federal Constitution and the spirit of co-operation that profoundly animated the American leaders. Jay himself was eventually won over to the view that the navigation privilege must be obtained at all costs.

In the meantime a wave of separatism had broken out in the West, accelerated by the fear that vital Western interests were being sacrificed by the Jay-Gardoqui negotiation. It must be remembered that the Western communities were unrepresented at that time in the Congress of the United States. Kentucky was still a part of Virginia, the Cumberland and Holston settlements were on land claimed by North Carolina. Western leaders were frequently adventurers, prone to intrigue, disgruntled by failure to realize their ambitions, and some times nursing a grievance against the United States for not rewarding them for their services during the Revolution. Thus James Wilkinson, a young Irishman who migrated to Lexington, Kentucky, in 1783, hoped to make his fortune trading down the river; but the Spaniards pricked his bubble the following year by closing the Mississippi. He and several other disappointed Kentucky traders then conspired together, and in 1787 Wilkinson loaded a flatboat with flour, bacon, tobacco, and other Kentucky produce and sailed down the river to bargain with Governor Miro of New Orleans. The Kentuckian's proposal was that if the Spaniards would allow him to trade he would return and persuade his

fellow colonists to throw off their American allegiance and join with Spain. His offer to leave the proceeds from the sale of his cargo in trust with the governor, until he made good on his promise, so impressed the latter that he agreed to the experiment. Wilkinson then returned to Kentucky via Philadelphia; but he found upon his arrival that he had overreached himself. Rumors of the conspiracy stimulated the latent loyalty of Kentuckians to the United States, and a popular convention met in 1788 to demand admission as a state to the new Union. The granting of this demand two years later deflected for all time the movement in the West to tie up with Spain.

In addition to Wilkinson there were John Sevier, the governor of the Holston settlements, and James Robertson of the Cumberland district, both of whom were heavily involved in Muscle Shoals and Tennessee lands. These men were led to believe that if they gave their allegiance to Spain they would win the support of that power in procuring the necessary concessions from the Indians. They kept in touch with Gardoqui in New York through James White, an Indian agent of the United States, who was apparently the author of the scheme. These plans were straws in the wind which the Spanish government and the colonial authorities at New Orleans took seriously. The latter now allowed the Westerners to use the river and land their cargoes at New Orleans under a special licensing system, and even opened up the country just north of the Floridas to American immigration—like inviting the Goths to settle down at the gates of Rome, Thomas Jefferson half-jokingly called it.

Nevertheless the Spaniards took pains at this time to fortify the up-river posts, thus strengthening their grip on the country north of the thirty-first parallel. Walnut Hills and Chickasaw Bluffs were both garrisoned in 1791; so was a new post called Confederación on the upper reaches of the Tombigbee. On the west bank of the Mississippi forts were also placed at the mouths of the Arkansas and the Missouri and below the mouth of the Ohio. In appearance Spain now had a firm grip on the whole of the Mississippi Valley. But the garrisons were small and the difficulties of supplying them all but insurmountable. The hub of the Spanish system was Havana, whence came all reinforcements. Sometimes a week was consumed between the mouth of the Mississippi and New Orleans alone; to reach St. Louis, the northernmost Spanish post, required two or three months' additional time. It was far easier for the Americans to float downstream than for the Spaniards to get their vessels up.

Let it be repeated, however, that it was no part of the plan of the

American government, as distinct from some of the adventurous spirits of the West, to wage a war of aggression for the conquest of the Mississippi. Under the benefits of the Spanish licensing system there was no urgent need of pressing matters, and, as Jefferson saw even in 1788, a policy of patient watchfulness was the better part of discretion. "A time of peace will not be the surest for obtaining this object," he observed. "Those, therefore, who have influence in the new country, would act wisely to endeavor to keep things quiet till the western parts of Europe shall be engaged in war."¹

As Secretary of State under Washington, Jefferson experimented with this policy. It ultimately achieved success, though Jefferson had by then left office. At first, when a conflict threatened on the horizon between Britain and Spain over Nootka Sound in 1790, he hoped to take advantage of the opportunity by menacing Spain. The air cleared between the two European powers, however, and Jefferson posted a diplomatic mission at Madrid with standing instructions to seek a treaty with the Spanish government. The time seemed propitious because of the violent upheaval on the Continent over the French Revolution. But in 1793 Britain and Spain entered an alliance against France, and with these two great North American powers making common cause Jefferson's chance of inveigling the Spaniards into giving up the right to close the Mississippi appeared slight. The advantage during these years continued to rest with Spain. There was only one condition under which she would grant the American desires—a treaty of alliance whereby the United States would give a guaranty of the territorial integrity of the Spanish possessions. But this was a price which the American commissioners were warned not to pay.

The situation suddenly changed in 1795. John Jay had signed in the preceding November an important treaty with Great Britain affecting vital matters in Anglo-American relations. The two governments concurred in the fields of their hitherto greatest friction—the British retention of the posts in the Northwest and the definition and rules regarding the seizure of contraband. Godoy, the Spanish Foreign Minister, recalled the stipulation in the Anglo-American treaty of 1783 concerning free use of the Mississippi and feared lest the Jay Treaty cloaked a secret alliance between Britain and the United States to force the issue. An Anglo-American combination seems to have been the one thing that the Spanish regarded as fatal to their cause in America. They had already withdrawn from the

¹ Jefferson, *Writings* (Ford ed.), V, 17.

war with France and in that way had canceled the British alliance Godoy's first effort to offset the unpleasant surprise was to win an alliance and a territorial guaranty from the United States. Neither William Short, who had conducted the negotiations at Madrid during the preceding four years, nor Thomas Pinckney, who had been sent from London to supersede Short, would consent to these terms; and the Spaniard finally capitulated.

The important Treaty of San Lorenzo, usually known as the Pinckney Treaty, signed October 27, 1795, strengthened, though it did not insure, the security of the American Southwest. It opened the Mississippi throughout its course to the free use of American citizens and granted them, for a period of three years, the right to deposit their goods at the port of New Orleans while awaiting transshipment. The King of Spain promised that at the end of that time he would either renew this permission or "assign to them on another part of the banks of the Mississippi an equivalent establishment." Finally, the treaty conceded the boundary at the thirty-first parallel, thereby bringing Natchez and Walnut Hills inside American jurisdiction. The United States thenceforth possessed a treaty right to the use of the lower Mississippi and the equally vital use of the port facilities of New Orleans. This insured the prosperity and political contentment of the American Southwest within the Union. But of course the treaty did not disturb the essential position of Spain in control of the mouth of the Mississippi and of the several important streams which drained into the Gulf through Florida. Nor did it affect the Spanish right to control the navigation of these other streams. To that extent the security problem of the Southwest was incompletely solved.

CHAPTER 3

LOUISIANA, 1800-1803

THE UNITED STATES in 1800 was still flanked on the south and west by the three Spanish provinces, East Florida, West Florida, and Louisiana. The Spaniards commanded the coast unbroken from the Atlantic side of Florida past the rivers which flowed into the Gulf, including the Mississippi, westward to the Rio Grande and beyond.

The two Floridas were administrative divisions created by the British when ceded to them in 1763. The line of division between these provinces was the Appalachicola River. East Florida comprised two isolated clusters of colonies, one around St. Marks on the Gulf coast and the other between St. Augustine and the St. Mary's River on the Atlantic side. These settlements do not fall within the range of the Louisiana problem. This problem, as it developed from 1800 to 1803, concerned in the immediate sense the bloc of territory from the Mississippi on the west to Mobile Bay on the east. From the American standpoint at that time this was strategically the most valuable segment of the coast, for it controlled the exits from the settled portion of the American West. New Orleans, near the mouth of the Mississippi, and Mobile, near the head of Mobile Bay, were the master keys. If the United States could acquire them, it would have a window on the Gulf of Mexico.

But there was a far deeper implication in this diplomatic problem. It will be recalled that the United States achieved a sense of security by the treaty arrangements made with Spain in 1795 concerning the use of the Mississippi and the port of New Orleans. This confidence was fated to be undermined by the events of 1800 to 1803, which pointed toward the resumption of a great North American French empire pivoting on the island of Santo Domingo in the Caribbean and the town of New Orleans on the mainland. The French were dynamic. It was not possible for Americans to possess the self-assurance in dealing with them as neighbors that they possessed toward the Spaniards. With Napoleon once in command of the key points on the Gulf and the River, it was by no means idle to suppose that the United States would, at the very least, lose its treaty rights. Then a French advance up the Mississippi might force a shrinkage of the American Union; the states of the Old Southwest might be detached from the Union and brought under French sway, reproducing the drift of things in 1793, the year of the Genet mission. To checkmate such a possibility the American government would be forced to seek refuge with Great Britain, the only other great power in the Western Hemisphere, and would thus resume its former helpless position of buffer on the North American continent between the British and the French.

The event which precipitated this whole issue was the secret agreement of San Ildefonso between the French Consul and the Spanish King, October 1, 1800. In return for a pledge of assistance in acquiring a kingdom in Italy for his brother-in-law, the Duke of Parma, the monarch agreed to re-cede to France the province of

Louisiana "with the same extent that it now has in the hands of Spain and that it had when France possessed it, and such as it ought to be according to the treaties subsequently concluded between Spain and other states"¹ Vague in phrasing, the treaty nevertheless forecast the transfer of a great inland empire to France. Since its original partition in 1762, Louisiana had suffered a number of curtailments. Originally it was the unbounded empire of the Ohio and Mississippi valleys, pioneered by LaSalle in 1682. In the eighteenth century it crept along the Gulf Coast in both directions from the mouth of the Mississippi. Its effective eastern edge on the Gulf was Mobile, fortified in 1718. Its vulnerable frontier lay, of course, in the upper Ohio Valley, where it was successfully challenged by the British. Moreover, Louisiana could be held together only so long as the gate into French Canada was open. When the British under Wolfe scaled the heights of Quebec in 1759, they truncated permanently the inland empire of France.

Under the first partition the west bank of the Mississippi became Spanish with the addition of its administrative center, New Orleans, which was on the east bank. All of the rest of French and Spanish territory to the east of the Mississippi was made British by the Treaty of 1763. It was then that the British created the two provinces of East and West Florida, with the latter's western boundary adjacent to the Spanish town of New Orleans. Twenty years later a redivision took place, the two Floridas returning to the Spanish fold. The Spaniards retained the British administrative division but governed West Florida from New Orleans, the most convenient capital for the settlements of the Gulf and Valley. Thus West Florida became once more reunited in fact with Louisiana, but when the Spanish monarch promised to return the latter to France he did not specify that the deal was to include West Florida. A convenient distinction could be made between the two.

New Orleans had experienced a substantial growth since 1763, especially since the Treaty of 1795 with the United States. It was now a town of about eight thousand, supported by the trade of the great valley. It was a distributing center for West Florida, the West Indies, and American and European ports. Flour brought down on flatboats from the up-river points—New Madrid and St. Louis on the Spanish side, Kentucky and Tennessee points on the American side—constituted its chief trade. Measured by the number of barrels, the ratio of local sales of flour to the export trade in 1802 was about

¹ Miller, *Treaties*, II, 509.

one to six. All but a few cargoes were deposited in the city for transshipment, and under the Treaty of 1795 shipments originating in American river ports enjoyed the duty-free privilege along with Spanish shipments. A substantial portion of the business of New Orleans was in the hands of American merchants, who shared the town with French Creoles, Germans, English, and a few Dutch and Italians. The Spanish authorities had made little attempt to enforce the regulations of the antique colonial system that obtained elsewhere in the Spanish empire but by special decrees had legalized the entry and residence of foreigners in Louisiana and both the Floridas. They could not well do otherwise, since the colony was really Spanish in administration only. The native white stock was French, and the demand for manufactured goods was met chiefly by imports from France via the French West Indies. Mexican silver dollars were smuggled up the river in payment for the imported flour, thus violating the ancient Spanish law against the export of the precious metals. When, in October 1802, Morales, the Spanish intendant, revoked the right of deposit contrary to the Treaty of 1795, he did so in order to stop the leak in bullion, and not on indirect orders from Napoleon.

Louisiana began to have fresh attractions for the French shortly after the American Revolution. Eléonore F. Moustier, the French minister to the United States at the time of the Federal Convention, was the first to read the signs of a great future in store for the region and to urge its recovery upon the French foreign office. The militant First French Republic instituted armed conquest in 1793, when it sent Citizen Genet to tempt restless American frontiersmen to attack New Orleans. Genet was thwarted by the Washington administration, which surely could not have seen any advantages for the United States in the conspiracy. It was the French Directory that discovered the right method. By offering a *quid pro quo* to the Spanish King in the form of an enlarged kingdom in Italy for the latter's brother-in-law they found Spain an honorable pretext for abandoning a colony that profited her nothing. Louisiana was indeed prosperous, but the Spanish government, once so hopeful in 1783, ruefully had to confess that it had got neither honor nor profit from its management of the province.

If the French could arrange a peace for us [the Spanish foreign minister wrote to his agent in Paris, June 22, 1800] in which we obtain Trinidad and Minorca, and the House of Parma obtains, in addition to its present possessions, the Papal Legations, Modena, and Reggio or the Milanese, we could not only give the three millions [in claims] to Bonaparte and Talleyrand but also Louisiana and many thanks into the bar-

gain, and we could flatter ourselves that such a peace had never before been obtained.²

The bargain was made at San Ildefonso, the palace of the Spanish ruler, just a few months after this was written. Disappointed in his vision of a French Asiatic empire, Bonaparte turned to the American scene. A French Caribbean empire, in place of the Spanish, seemed perfectly feasible. The island of Santo Domingo was the natural center for such a development. The eastern portion of this island the French had previously acquired from Spain by the treaty of peace in 1795; the western half, Haiti, was already theirs. Fifty thousand Creoles resident in Paris, but with property in Santo Domingo, were ready to stand behind the scheme; and only a native rebellion led by the Negro, Toussaint L'Ouverture, appeared to be in the way. Even President Jefferson, not at first alert to the implications of a French suppression of Toussaint, indicated the French army and fleet would be furnished with whatever it needed from America. But Napoleon's full plan included, first, the sending of an expedition to subdue Santo Domingo; second, another to take possession of New Orleans; and, finally, further negotiation with Spain to induce her to throw in at least West Florida as part of the bargain over Louisiana. A large army under General Leclerc did leave France in December 1801 for Santo Domingo; but the expected victory did not follow. The blacks of the island put up a desperate resistance, and the ill-fated expedition was all but swept away by a terrible plague of yellow fever. In the meantime, another force intended to take over New Orleans from the Spaniards was collected in The Netherlands during the fall and winter of 1802; but a hard freeze held the ships in port. By the time of the spring thaw Napoleon was again embroiled with the British, and further prosecution of the scheme was out of the question. New Orleans was actually under French occupation for but twenty days in November 1803, prior to being turned over to the United States.

When President Jefferson did grasp the implications of the Franco-Spanish agreement at San Ildefonso, he had to face the possibility of "marrying the British fleet and nation," as he himself expressed it in a letter to Livingston, the American minister to France.³ Only thus could the United States find security in case the

² Quoted by Whitaker, *The Mississippi Question, 1795-1803* (New York, 1934), p. 176.

³ Timothy Pickering, the Federalist secretary of state under John Adams, anticipated in 1797 the return of Louisiana to France and made a gesture in the direction of Britain. Pickering thought the French would take the Floridas and Louisiana, and then foment an insurrection in Canada that would restore that province to their empire. In his words, France meant "to renew the ancient plan

French became entrenched at New Orleans. The fact that Napoleon required time to develop his plans made it possible for the United States to play a lone hand in its diplomacy at Paris. Repeated efforts on the part of Livingston in 1802 to extract an agreement from the French met with no encouragement, however. General Leclerc had already sailed for Santo Domingo when Livingston reached the French capital, and the plan for the second army to be dispatched to New Orleans went forward. Napoleon's lack of finances, and not American diplomacy, delayed the mustering of this expedition. Livingston offered money in payment for New Orleans and a part of West Florida; but so long as the prospect of ultimate success from the operations in Santo Domingo appeared good, this was no fair exchange for the prize of empire to be found in the Caribbean and Louisiana.

Public sentiment in the United States in 1802 grasped the seriousness of the outlook. Either New Orleans would have to be controlled or the prospect of the Western states seceding and joining the French must be faced. A British alliance, the only alternative, was openly discussed. By February 1803, the Americans were saying, according to the French minister, Pichon,

that England courts the American alliance, that the United States have the fate of the New World in their hands, that they will hold the balance between us and England and that the Power which forces them to quit their neutral role will have reason to repent of it.⁴

Jefferson himself was, of course, fully aware that confronting France with the prospect of an Anglo-American counterpoise in the West

of her monarchs of *circumscribing* and encircling what now constitute the Atlantic States." Four years later, after the news of the Treaty of San Ildefonso had leaked out, Lord Hawkesbury, the British foreign secretary, expressed the same thought. "Thus," he observed, "would be realizing the plan to prevent the accomplishment of which the SEVEN YEARS WAR took place."

The American ministers in both London and Paris throughout 1802 pleaded earnestly with the British for their support but found the latter unresponsive. Finally, just prior to the transaction in Paris, Rufus King in London was warned that Britain would probably have to occupy New Orleans. But, it was quickly added, "England would not accept the Country were all agreed to give it to her, that were she to occupy it, it would not be to keep it but to prevent another Power from obtaining it, and . . . that this end would be best effected by its belonging to the United States."

The documents revealing these American pleas to Great Britain were printed for the first time in W. R. Manning, ed., *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States: Canadian Relations, 1784-1860* (4 vols., Washington, D. C., 1940-44), I, 111-12, 525-61.

⁴ Quoted by E. Wilson Lyon, *Louisiana in French Diplomacy, 1759-1804* (Norman, Oklahoma, 1934), p. 182.

might make Napoleon hesitate. He urged the possibility upon both the French and Spanish envoys, whose reports, added to the disaster in Santo Domingo, the failure to re-occupy New Orleans, and the immediate prospect of war with England, were the deciding factors in consummating one of the most remarkable real estate deals in history.

The objective of Jefferson's diplomacy was that of insuring the American position on the Mississippi, though he was not averse to a slice of Louisiana, if he could get it. In Paris Livingston kept playing the one card in his hand—the possibility of an American alliance with Britain. When he was asked by Joseph Bonaparte if the United States would prefer the Floridas to Louisiana, his answer came promptly. He wrote Madison: "I told him there was no comparison of value, but that we had no wish to extend our boundary across the Mississippi, . . . that all we sought was security, and not the extension of territory."⁵ This was Livingston's view in October 1802, when there seemed no immediate prospect of a solution. But two months later, thinking his chances somewhat improved, he was suggesting to the French that they divide Louisiana with the United States at the Arkansas River. Livingston's great asset was the growing imminence of war between France and Britain. The United States was the counterbalance between them.

At about the same time Du Pont de Nemours, a naturalized American citizen, wrote his friend, Thomas Jefferson, from Paris proposing that the United States offer six million dollars for New Orleans and the Floridas, France to keep the west bank of the Mississippi and share the river with this country. Jefferson accepted this as the only practicable outcome of the dilemma, and allowed Du Pont to try his hand in Paris. Further, in order to appease the disturbed people of the American West, Jefferson sent James Monroe to Paris to "assist" Livingston. Monroe having notoriously identified himself with the West in previous years, his appointment served a political end, but it had little other usefulness. As a last resort Monroe was to go to London to open talks with the British ministers.

The situation changed when at last Napoleon was ready to admit failure. Spain declined to throw in the Floridas, moreover, and without them the value of Louisiana was considerably lessened. The defense of the latter rested, in part at least, on the possession of Mobile and Pensacola. The transaction was terminated quickly when the French proffered Louisiana to Livingston and Monroe just as

⁵ *American State Papers, Foreign Relations*, II, 526

they had received it from Spain, in return for \$15,000,000. This meant a corridor of undefined width down the right bank of the Mississippi and the Isle of Orleans on the left. Whether or not it also embraced West Florida was open to two interpretations.

The financing of the transaction was handled in the following manner. \$3,750,000 was subtracted from the total to satisfy the claims of American citizens against the French government for property damage at sea. The balance of \$11,250,000 was paid in the form of stock at 6 per cent interest. Baring & Company of London and Hope & Company of Amsterdam bought the stock direct in their own names. The interest of \$675,000 per year, to run for fifteen years, was their inducement, and the British government, though on the eve of war with the French, considered the bargain a good one. In addition the bankers deducted \$1,500,093.80 as their commission and paid the balance in francs (fr. 32,000,000) to Napoleon. The latter expended the sum in constructing batteaux at Boulogne for an invasion of England that he subsequently abandoned.

Money was a consideration with the French Emperor because he wanted it for a specific purpose. But according to Napoleon himself his chief reason for suddenly proffering the territory to the United States, after becoming convinced of his own inability to exploit it, was to break up the possibility of an Anglo-American rapprochement. "This accession of territory," he told his finance minister, Barbé-Marbois, "affirms forever the power of the United States, and I have just given England a maritime rival that sooner or later will lay low her pride."⁶ Napoleon's shrewdness was demonstrated by the ensuing quarrels between England and the United States over the issue of neutral rights.

The Louisiana Purchase was a momentous reinforcement of the continental security of the United States. It eliminated France as a rival in North America and thus voided the unwelcome necessity of a political alliance with Great Britain. By so doing it advanced American security in terms of freedom of action in the Western Hemisphere. On the other hand, it fell considerably short of furnishing complete continental safety, even in the South. The Floridas had been the real goal. They remained in the hands of their Spanish owner, who in the wars of the European coalition against the French Emperor became the ally of Great Britain. Thus, as potential mistress of this strategic coast, the latter still held a mortgage upon the United States.

⁶ Quoted in Lyon, *op. cit.*, 205-6.

CHAPTER 4

THE WAR OF 1812 AND
THE PEACE OF GHENT

AMERICAN diplomats in the twenty years after the Revolution had labored to bring about a genuine independence and feeling of security in the United States which mere formal acknowledgment by Great Britain in 1783 had failed to convey. By 1803, remarkable success had attended their efforts, as we have seen in the three preceding chapters—the country was now relieved of the strain of serving as buffer between two powerful rivals on the North American continent. But security, even on the land, was not complete in 1803; the British, as we shall see, still held a position of advantage in the interior. Furthermore, the dogged warfare renewed between Britain and France in the same year for mastery of Europe unsettled the outlook on the Atlantic. Each of the belligerents aimed to make neutral shipping serve its ends by doing its carrying business at sea while sacrificing the business offered by its enemy. Thus France offered American skippers her lucrative West Indian and coastal trade but under the Continental System forbade them the benefits of trade with England. On its part the latter power gradually and firmly shepherded Yankee ships into the English carrying trade but punished them if they took business from the French. Under the licensing system developed by the Orders in Council of 1806–8, American shipping was reduced to its former position in Colonial days of dependence on the mother country. Add to this the increasing severity and efficiency of British impressment, which affected the personal safety of American citizens at sea and the dignity of their flag, and one can see that extreme violence was done the conception of national independence which had inspired the founders of the Republic.

Thomas Jefferson sought security for American ships and men on the high seas; and he interpreted security in terms of "freedom of the seas," that is, the right of the neutral to navigate the ocean without molestation at the hands of a belligerent. Through James Monroe and William Pinkney he sought to bargain with the British government in 1806; the latter failed to promise real relief, however, and in June 1807 one of its warships, the "Leopard," aggravated the impressment issue by firing upon and boarding the American frigate,

"Chesapeake" This incident earned for impressment the importance of being the simplest and most direct issue in the festering quarrel with Britain. It pinned the badge of national degradation on the United States. The British government might disavow the attack on the "Chesapeake," as it did; but when it continued to impress seamen in the time-honored manner, the incident could scarcely be overlooked. It "put war in my hand," recalled Jefferson five years later. Survivors of the Revolution, like John Adams, felt they were faced with a second war for independence, and the aggressive and patriotic people of the West henceforth never ceased to think of British impressment as other than a challenge to the national honor.

President Jefferson hushed the fledgling war cry of 1807 and put his faith in economic warfare as a sound means of securing basic concessions from both Britain and France. Under his leadership the United States intentionally avoided war in the military sense, and made no armed preparations whatever. Embargo and nonintercourse, the weapons of Jefferson, brought only frustration to the people of the United States, however. War became an issue again in 1811, when the "Westerners," led by Henry Clay, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, made it so. These men, the War Hawks of the Twelfth Congress, nursing grievances of their own against the British, were deeply moved by the fate of their fellow countrymen on the distant Atlantic; they warmed to the thought of war as the grand stroke which would achieve security on land and sea; and they fancied that their own security was contingent upon expelling the British from the American continent. They took scant stock of the serious and costly preparations needed to fight the kind of a war they had in mind, and with characteristic frontier recklessness they deliberately fathered the movement in Congress that culminated in a declaration of war against Great Britain on June 18, 1812.¹

Andrew Jackson, one of the most zealous of the "Liberty Boys of the West," thus voiced their war aims:

For what are we going to fight? . . . we are going to fight for the reestablishment of our national character . . . the protection of our maritime citizens, impressed on board British men of war . . . to vindicate our right to a free trade, and open a market for the productions of our soil, now perishing on our hands . . . in fine, to seek some indemnity for past injuries, some security against future aggressions, by

¹ Impressment, the British and French regulation of neutral shipping, and the American program of defending neutral rights are examined in separate chapters under "Neutrality" (see Part III), chapters 48 and 51, pp. 717-21 and 733-35.

the conquest of all the British dominions upon the continent of north america²

The demand of the West for war was conditioned by the potential challenge that came from the direction of Canada. Although the Jay Treaty had secured an abandonment of the British garrisons south of the Great Lakes in 1796, the situation in the Old Northwest had changed less than appearances indicated. The immense competitive advantage held by the British fur traders was unimpaired. Indians and citizens of both countries were free under the treaty to cross and recross the border carrying peltries without paying duty, and the Mississippi was free for British use.

Under cover of these treaty rights, enterprising Canadian traders roamed far into the American interior and kept alive their traditional friendship with the Indians. When Louisiana became American in 1803, they shortly appeared at St. Louis, the principal post on the upper Mississippi, in the fond hope of exploiting the Indian trade in country from which they had formerly been barred by the French. An executive order from President Jefferson, who refused to extend the provisions of the Jay Treaty to the territory acquired from France, frustrated this hope. Nevertheless, their attempt bears witness to the energy and determination of the Canadians, who, like the French, thought of the continent as a vast fur empire. Moreover, the British government backed them with such force that in 1806 it got an undertaking from the two American envoys in London, Monroe and Pinkney, to extend the privileges of the Jay Treaty beyond the Mississippi. Jefferson vetoed Monroe and Pinkney's concessions; but the Jay Treaty was intended to be permanent, and the President was unable by diplomacy to dislodge the British fur trader from his position east of the Mississippi.

The grip of the fur trader on the region depended on a number of small Indian tribes, aggregating in 1810 not more than five thousand warriors. These were being slowly pushed west by an American population in the Ohio Valley two hundred times their number. Contempt mixed with fear characterized the American attitude toward the Indians. The settlers were mainly located in a narrow corridor along the banks of the Ohio River, their mere number constituting a sure barrier against attack. There were, however, a few exposed settlements in the heart of the wilderness: Kaskaskia in the Illinois country, Vincennes on the lower Wabash, Detroit between Lake Erie and Lake St. Clair, and Fort Dearborn on Lake Michigan.

Between the jealousy and exasperation of the red men and the

² Quoted by Bernard Mayo, *Henry Clay* (Boston, 1937), pp. 457-58

impatience of the Americans, who hunted without scruple on the Indians' lands, the difficulty of striking a balance became patent. The largest of the tribes, the Shawnee and Wyandot, inhabited the valleys of the Wabash and the Maumee, and were in close contact with the British fur-trading post at Fort Malden. The latter, erected on the Canadian side of Lake Erie near the mouth of the Detroit River, efficiently filled the place previously held by the British posts on the south side of the lake. From Malden flowed a steady stream of blankets, guns, ammunition, and other goods across the lake and up the Maumee. The object of the British was political rather than commercial. The value of the goods shipped from Malden by the Indian Department of the British government exceeded many times the worth of the peltry taken in exchange. In 1811, according to reports reaching the American governor of Indiana Territory, William Henry Harrison, the exchange was so uneven that the entire yield of peltry for the year would not cover the cost of freighting the goods out from London.

This does not mean that the British authorities intended to goad the Indians into a general massacre of the Americans. On the contrary, they hoped to restrain the tribes, keep them prosperous and contented, and use them as an effective screen against American communities pushing up toward the lake. As long as the red men controlled the Wabash, the Americans could not make good use of the Old Northwest. Moreover, a well-stocked Indian arsenal was a reinsurance for the British in Canada in case of a general war between Britain and the United States. After the "Chesapeake" affair the British paid more attention to their Indian allies than ever. They encouraged the tribes to believe they could withstand the shock of American advance; simultaneously they threw their influence against the red men's impulse to strike back at the Americans. The paradox of the British position was fully grasped by their able General Brock, the man who repulsed the American invasion of Canada in 1812. Said Brock in February 1811: "Our cold attempt to dissuade [the Indians from making war on the United States could hardly be expected to prevail] after giving such manifest indications of a contrary sentiment by the liberal quantity of military stores with which they were dismissed."⁸ Nine months later the Indians gave force to Brock's warning when they attacked Harrison's army at Tippecanoe.

The security of the Wabash Indians diminished rapidly with the passing years. Between them and the Ohio River was a broad wilderness held by such puny tribes as the Piankeshaws, who could boast of

⁸ Quoted in Channing, *History of the United States*, IV, 458 and note.

scarcely thirty warriors. In 1805, Governor Harrison made agreements with these tribes to take over their lands, thereby extending the American zone of occupation close to the Wabash. Here the tribes made their stand under the lead of the great Shawnee chief, Tecumseh. Tecumseh roamed far and wide to persuade the tribes to form one nation to resist further land cessions to the whites. His goal was a confederacy of all the tribes of the West and the Southwest, and he made his influence felt even among the distant Creeks and Cherokees of the Old Southwest. He also believed that his people must become tillers of the soil, like the whites, if they were to save themselves; and, apparently with help from Malden, he laid out a model Indian village on Tippecanoe Creek, between the Wabash and the Maumee, in the spring of 1808. Tippecanoe was the natural spearhead of Indian hopes and American fears. From it the red men could strike south at the American settlements of the lower Wabash or north against the lake forts, if they were so minded; and in the Maumee they possessed a natural link with Fort Malden which would be hard to break.

In spite of Tecumseh's efforts Harrison made new treaties with the tribes the very next year, and in November 1811 the governor led an army of one thousand men within sight of Tippecanoe. The Indians attacked on the night of the seventh, the governor's army was victorious, but lost over a fifth of its effectives. Tippecanoe precipitated Indian attacks all over the West, and Harrison having no reinforcements was unable to make good his victory. An adequate army of occupation which could overawe the Indians was beyond the capabilities of the United States government. Elation over Tippecanoe mingled with dread of sudden massacre to be visited upon the American outposts and rage against the British now gripped the West. "The blood of our murdered countrymen must be avenged," cried Andrew Jackson from Tennessee.

Very devious was the road from Tippecanoe to the declaration of war against Britain. The seven and one-half months' interval was rich in argument but barren in sober preparation. The War Hawks indulged in much tall talk, but showed their ignorance of what war meant and their reluctance to co-operate in a defense program that would promise results. They raged against impressment, for instance, but voted down a bill to enlarge the navy. The British navy was so large that it had been maintaining an off-shore blockade along the American coast for years; yet the war makers in Congress naively dreamed of bringing the mistress of the seas to her knees by means of privateers.

Thoughts of conquering Canada and the Spanish Floridas became facile substitutes for the old dread of the Indian and for jealousy of the fur trader. Such effusions as the following, common enough in the Twelfth Congress and, on the whole, milder than similar expressions of opinion by their newspapers, voiced both the grudges and the dreams of the Westerners:

I shall never die contented until I see [Britain's] expulsion from North America, and her territories incorporated with the United States. . . . In point of territorial limit, the map will improve its importance. The waters of the St. Lawrence and the Mississippi interlock in a number of places, and the great Disposer of Human Events intended those two rivers should belong to the same people.⁴

Yet even in their thirst for conquest the War Hawks betrayed a second weakness. Georgians, Carolinians, and Tennesseans wanted to capitalize the opportunity by wresting the remainder of the Floridas from the Spaniard, when the men of the Northwest demanded an army for the invasion of Canada, the Southerners refused to vote the necessary appropriations.

Speechifying, to be sure, did not precipitate the conflict. The naiveté of the young War Hawks is perhaps understandable, what is puzzling is the acquiescence that came from men of ripe years and experience. Jefferson thought Canada could be taken by mere marching; Monroe wanted war apparently because he believed the opportunity at hand for taking Florida; President Madison showed more caution, yet he too agreed that war was the eventual remedy. Madison pinned a dying faith on the efficacy of nonintercourse as a means of bringing Britain to book; but on June 1, 1812, he cast in his lot for war. The President put his proposal on the ground of British outrages at sea, in this respect the British had been transgressors for nearly a score of years already, and in 1812 no incident like the "Chesapeake" affair occurred to trouble the waters. In the preceding five years French seizures had been more flagrant than British, and at all times more capricious. Since 1807 Napoleon had sequestered 558 American ships, the British 389. The latter at least published their rules and followed them methodically, while Napoleon behaved fitfully; sometimes he laid hold on scores of ships at once; at other times he ignored them completely.⁵

⁴ Representative Richard M. Johnson of Kentucky, as quoted in Julius W. Pratt, *The Expansionists of 1812* (New York, 1925), p. 52.

⁵ Richard S. Smith, a young New England merchant acting as American consul at Gothenburg, Sweden, in 1811, had this to say in a letter to his brother written on December 22. " . . . We have received the anxiously expected message of the

It took the legislative branch seventeen days to debate the resolution for war, and the division stood 79 to 49 in the House and 19 to 13 in the Senate. The vote was far from sectional, since in the final line-up the Eastern seaboard divided on the issue and cast some of its votes for war. Plainly there were incentives other than those excited by the War Hawks. Nevertheless, the West and the South continued to run a high temperature, in contrast to differing opinions along the coast. Congressmen from Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, Georgia, and South Carolina were unanimous for war, frontiersmen, with scores of their own to pay off, chorused approval of the long-neglected resolve to vindicate sailors' rights; and the sophisticated and disgruntled seaport merchants, particularly those of New England, turned a cold shoulder on both.

It is not our province to detail the military phases of the war. The subject must be dismissed with the observation that lack of preparation, lack of generalship on the part of the commanders (with notable exceptions not numerous enough to turn the scales), apathy on the part of the country in general, enmity toward the war on the part of New England in particular, and half-heartedness on the part of the rank and file in the Army, together made of the war all but a fiasco, if one bears in mind the original American motivation. A holiday march into Canada by General Hull from Detroit—the poorest possible point for the departure of an invading army from the standpoint of strategy—was turned into a retreat and a surrender. Commodore Perry recaptured control of Lake Erie in September 1813, a year after the surrender of Detroit, but though the Americans again tried an invasion of Canada they revealed an inability to penetrate deeply into the country. On the seas audacious American privateers operating in the English Channel made English shippers somewhat unhappy, and the half-dozen frigates that made up the backbone of the American Navy won a romantic memory for themselves in single engagements. But the position of the United States was far from secure. The British offshore blockade remained intact for the duration of the war; the United States possessed no ships-of-the-line, the only type of vessel able to challenge it, and made no

President to Congress. I am sorry to observe in it, the same indecision which marks all the acts of Mr. Madison's administration, as usual I find that the outrages of France are glossed over in the most shameful manner, while every fault of England is magnified and depicted in the strongest colours, in order to excite the resentment of the people." Franklin D. Scott, ed., "President Madison's Foreign Policy—the Views of an American Merchant Abroad in 1811." *Journal of Modern History*, XVI (1944), 294-98.

attempt to build any. In consequence the British Admiral Cockburn encountered no resistance when he sailed up Chesapeake Bay in June 1814 and raided and burned a portion of Washington. It was retaliation for the four-day burning and looting of Toronto (then known as York), in which American soldiers had indulged themselves more than a year before.

Not unnaturally the United States was regarded in England as an ally of Napoleon. Had it not entered the war at a time when the Emperor of the French had achieved a dizzy height of power? But by 1814 Napoleon had at last been put aside on the island of Elba, and Britain was in the mood to "give Jonathan a good drubbing." The raid on Washington was part of a concerted plan to close in on the United States on its own soil, force it back from its frontiers, and thus prevent it from again attacking British colonies. At about the same time an army from Canada attempted entry from the north by way of the historic route past Lake Champlain, but was turned back by a striking victory won by Captain McDonough against a superior British naval force on the lake. The third campaign was aimed at New Orleans and the Mississippi, with a view to plugging up the river and forcing the United States to give guaranties for the safety of the Indians and the British colonies in the north.

The British government now wanted the Duke of Wellington to take twenty thousand of his veterans from France and head the British armies in America, but the Iron Duke, with an eye cocked for further trouble from France, thought the war in America too indecisive and purposeless to warrant such an expedition. The British forces in America were already large enough, he reasoned, to defend British territory, their weakness lying in their failure to keep control of the Lakes. As for a war of conquest against the United States, to which the campaigns as sketched above pointed, he could find nothing to recommend it. "You have no right from the state of war," he told the ministers,

to demand any concession of territory from America. Considering everything, it is my opinion that the war has been a most successful one, and highly honourable to the British arms; but . . . you have not been able to carry it into the enemy's territory, notwithstanding your military success . . . and have not even cleared your own territory of the enemy on the point of attack. You cannot then, on any principle of equality in negotiation, claim a cession of territory except in exchange for other advantages which you have in your power.⁶

⁶ Quoted by Dudley Mills, "The Duke of Wellington and the Peace Negotiations at Ghent in 1814," *Canadian Historical Review*, II (1921), 19-32.

Wellington wanted the ministry to try to make a peace based simply on the principle of the *status quo ante bellum*, before it attempted any further conquests. If the New Orleans expedition, which was already under way, should succeed, the disposition of Louisiana might be made a separate issue. The disaster that this expedition encountered at the hands of Andrew Jackson in January 1815 proved Wellington's sagacity. The United States had achieved none of its own objectives in the field; but it perhaps was adequate to the defense of its soil.

Peace talk had been going on between the two countries, as a matter of fact, almost from the first week of the war. The American chargé in London, Jonathan Russell, had remained at his post, and there is every reason to believe that he could have arranged a peace in 1812 if Madison had been willing to give up the impressment issue. Since he had made this the chief issue for which the United States was fighting, however, the President was hardly in a position to beat a retreat so early in the conflict. As an American war aim, the conquest of Canada faded away quickly. Among the elder statesmen Jefferson alone regarded it as indispensable to security, the President and his Secretary of State, James Monroe, were indifferent, and indeed took the view from the start that any territory held in Canada would be used as a trading point for other advantages to be obtained from the British. Considering all the circumstances, one is led to believe that the theory so boisterously set forth by the War Hawks that capture of British North America was necessary for American security found only the most superficial acceptance.

Nothing in the military situation during the whole war was really promising for the American cause, and the turn in the fortunes of war on the European Continent in favor of British arms worsened the position of the American government. A Russian offer to mediate, made in September 1812, when Napoleon was knocking at the gates of Moscow, was a straw eagerly grasped, but discouraging if Russian help was expected. Madison sent two envoys, Albert Gallatin and Senator James A. Bayard, all the way to the Russian capital to join John Quincy Adams, already there as United States minister. The President hoped thus to win the Czar's aid against his ally, Great Britain, on questions of impressment and maritime rights. The fact is that Russia was able to do nothing, since the British government rejected the Czar's offer of 1812 and also a second one made in September 1813. Britain's reason for so doing is known to have been her determination to prevent a Russian-American entente on

issues that so vitally touched her sea power. Unquestionably the Madison administration was in the position of searching for peace while the British government remained coldly indifferent. When the latter at last offered to meet the American peace commission separately, after the second Russian offer had been rejected, the President grasped the opportunity quickly and sent Henry Clay, the leading War Hawk, to reinforce Gallatin, Bayard, and Adams. Jonathan Russell, who had meanwhile remained in London, was the fifth member of this delegation of prominent Americans.

Chronic discord among themselves over even the most trifling matters hardly added to the strength of this delegation. The breezy Westerner, who had once talked so glibly of conquering Canada, and the austere Yankee, John Quincy Adams, with a successful diplomatic career behind him, could not possibly be compatible. Also they trod on each other's toes when it came to agreeing on serious questions of the peace. The war had destroyed the right of New England fisherfolk to fish off the coasts of Newfoundland, a right which they had once enjoyed as British subjects and which was expressly conceded them in 1783 through the efforts of John Adams. John Quincy, the son, wanted the fishing rights restored in the treaty of peace, Clay, however, was painfully aware of the vulnerable position he would be in with respect to the navigation of the Mississippi if this purely sectional interest of New England were made an important condition of the peace. If the fisheries were reopened to the Americans, the Mississippi would have to be thrown open once more to Britishers. The Treaty of 1783 had declared that the river should "forever" remain open to British subjects, but Westerners had fretted against it for years. It was to them a question of security, since it was associated with the British fur trader and the Indian, and was one of the vital issues of the war. Clay, the prince of War Hawks, could not well return with this condition reimposed. The threatened deadlock was averted through the skill of Albert Gallatin, who persuaded both his impatient colleagues and the British commissioners to leave these issues unmentioned in the treaty of peace. They were tacitly put on the list of deferred subjects which would have to be settled at some later date.

There were other and even more serious issues over which it was found necessary ultimately to draw a veil. In spite of the misfortunes of war, the Madison administration persisted in its demands for a promise from the British government to abandon impressment. Gradually hope in this respect, founded probably upon anticipation of support from Russia and other small-navy European neutrals, yielded

to despair. Gallatin and Bayard joined with the American representative left in London, Reuben Beasley, in urging the administration to give up the hopeless issue. "The order of the day," reported Beasley in May 1814,

is division of the States and conquest. The more moderate [of the English] think that when our Seaboard is laid waste and we are made to agree to a line which shall exclude us from the lakes; to give up a part of our claim on Louisiana and the privilege of fishing on the banks, etc., peace may be made with us.⁷

This was indeed a dismal sort of dispatch to receive in Washington just as the British admiral, Cockburn, was preparing to march on the capital city. It was the better part of discretion, to say the least, for Monroe to relinquish the impressment demand.

Impressment was thus removed from the agenda nearly two months before the actual peace conference commenced. The Americans were scheduled to meet their British colleagues in the ancient Flemish town of Ghent, but no meeting took place till August. The British commissioners—Henry Goulburn, Lord Gambier, and Dr. William Adams—were little better than stuffed shirts; the real British diplomats, Castlereagh, Wellington, and Liverpool, were preoccupied at the great Congress of Vienna. The condition that the British set forth as the *sine qua non* of peace was, as Beasley had correctly anticipated, the retirement of the United States from the Lakes to a treaty line approximately the same as that which had been drawn with the Indians in the Treaty of Greenville (1795). This was a line reaching from the mouth of the Kentucky River diagonally through Ohio to the mouth of the Cuyahoga. North and west of this line the tribes were to be guaranteed their independence jointly by Great Britain and the United States. The Indian buffer state, a paper plan in 1791-94, was now to become a reality, backed by all the force that a winning government could bring to bear. The plan was the work of the fur merchants, who convinced Lord Castlereagh, the head of the British foreign office, that Canada's days would be numbered unless some positive estoppel to American settlement of the Old Northwest was interposed. If the United States actually established itself on the Lakes, Canada would be open to attack at any time; if, on the other hand, the forests of the Indiana country were leveled, British North America, believed to be so dependent upon the fur interests, would become a phantom.

⁷ Quoted from the papers of Jonathan Russell in C. M. Gates, "The West in American Diplomacy, 1812-1815," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XXVI (1939-40), 499-510.

Obviously the British condition involved the kind of territorial cession that would vitally affect the future. It spelled either trouble or abject submission. At the moment the American envoys had no weapon against it stronger than that of publicity. "If we cannot make an honorable peace," Jonathan Russell had said to Clay in the preceding May, "I trust at least we shall be able to put the enemy so completely in the wrong that we shall unite every honest American in the vigorous prosecution of the war."⁸ The Americans succeeded in getting their message over admirably both to their own countrymen and to the British public. Intention to reclaim lands from the Indians they did not deny. "If this be a spirit of aggrandizement," they said, the undersigned are prepared to admit, in that sense, its existence: but they must deny that it affords the slightest proof of an intention not to respect the boundaries between them and European nations, or of a desire to encroach upon the territories of Great Britain. . . . They will not suppose that that Government will avow, as the basis of their policy towards the United States a system of arresting their natural growth within their own territories, for the sake of preserving a perpetual desert for savages.⁹

These were telling blows, if only verbal, and they seem to have had their effect. Already affected by the coolness of Wellington toward a war for conquest in America, the ministry admitted hearing opposition murmurs in Parliament. The outcome was that, after procrastinating through the fall, it authorized a treaty on the basis of the status quo. As a gesture to the Indians an innocuous provision was inserted in the treaty whereby each government asserted its intention to respect the rights of the red men to their ancestral lands—there was of course no stipulation against the subsequent purchase of those lands.

To all appearances the Treaty of Ghent returned the two former enemies to precisely the same status they held before the American War. Hawks had pompously set forth on their war of conquest. On balance, the military and naval situation in 1814, until the battle on Lake Champlain in September, was obviously favorable to the British. Sensible statesmanship in Britain, however, vetoed what could have resulted only in a repetition of the American Revolution.

The value of the experience of the War of 1812 should not be set too high. A legacy of hatred was left in each country for the other, which each was slow in overcoming. Pitfalls lurked ahead in

⁸ Quoted by Gates, *op. cit.*

⁹ W. R. Manning, *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States. Canadian Relations, 1784-1860* (2 vols., Washington, 1940-42), I, 665

the many problems which arose over the partition of the North American continent, and later still over the control of the Caribbean Sea. The Treaty of Ghent gave no explicit promise of security for either country on land or sea; nevertheless it marked a positive gain for each side. The American West really won its objective when the British government relinquished all connection with the Indians south of the Lakes, the menace to American security on land thereby being terminated. Canada benefited in like manner: the fiasco of invasion in 1812 increased her self-assurance and revealed how shallow and unsound was the desire for conquest of Canadian soil in the United States. A conception of security saner and healthier than that which required expulsion of the British from North America was now allowed to grow

CHAPTER 5

ARMS REDUCTION ON THE LAKES: THE AGREEMENT OF 1817

THE GREAT LAKES were the natural strategic frontier in the Northwest. The British had successfully kept control of them until the War of 1812, and they expected to continue doing so thereafter. The three American attempts at invasion of Canada during the war, all coming from the southern shores of Lake Erie and Lake Ontario, were convincing arguments for regaining the naval superiority that had been temporarily lost; without it the Canadian provinces would be forever open to attack. On their part, the Americans had equally strong convictions about the importance of the Great Lakes to their own safety. "Experience has shown," wrote Monroe to the American peace commissioners,

that Great Britain cannot participate in the dominion and navigation of the Lakes, without incurring the danger of an early renewal of the war. *It was by means of the Lakes that the British Government interfered with and gained an ascendancy over the Indians, even with our own limits.* The effect produced by the massacre of our Citizens, after they were made prisoners, and of defenceless women and children along our frontiers, need not be described. It will perhaps never be removed, while Great Britain retains in her hands the Government of those Provinces . . . ¹

¹ Manning, *op. cit.*, I, 217-18. Italics inserted.

Each party, with experience as the teacher, went to Ghent resolved to dislodge the other from the Lakes. Each looked upon exclusive possession as its only security and wanted the other to retreat from its particular shore. The British, we remember, demanded the American recognition of the Indian barrier state and had a definite boundary to propose; the Americans were less precise but spoke of the British retiring from "those Provinces." This seemed to mean the northern shores of Erie and Ontario, which embraced the western extremities of Canada in those days. Peace was hopeless if the British did not agree to this withdrawal; the American settlements were expanding rapidly toward Detroit and beyond to Lake Michigan; and Monroe spoke of the "inevitable" border clashes certain to provoke another war. "The cupidity of the British Traders," he continued, "will admit of no controul. The inevitable consequence of another war, and even of the present, if persevered in by the British Government, must be to sever those provinces by force from Great Britain."

Neither country achieved its objective in the Peace of Ghent; and, since a barrier wilderness between them was impracticable, it remained to be seen whether other means of sharing a strategic frontier in peace could be discovered. One important factor had indeed already altered the situation, though the American government was ignorant in 1814 of the change. The Canadian fur traffic had already shifted away from the southern shores of Erie and Ontario; hence the trader would no longer be a disturbing element among the Indians in that region. The city of Montreal, moreover, was beginning to have resources other than furs upon which to base its prosperity. Nevertheless, this was not the full answer. There was a prospect of the Canadian fur trade simply shifting farther to the west, beyond Michilimackinac. The chief director of the North West Company, which controlled the Montreal fur business, indeed predicted this; and he tried to persuade the British governor to refuse surrender of this most distant of the former frontier posts. Michilimackinac, it will be recalled, had been recaptured by British forces during the War of 1812. If it had been kept, one might reasonably have expected a repetition on the banks of Lakes Michigan, Huron, and Superior of the previous troubles in the Old Northwest. Temporarily the governor allowed himself to be influenced by the pleas of the fur traders; but the American possession of Fort Malden at the mouth of the Detroit River was the counter. Malden was given up on July 1, 1815, and the British evacuated Michilimackinac eighteen days later.

Meanwhile other sources of tension endangered the peace on Lakes Erie and Ontario. The United States held naval superiority for the time being; but the government in London regarded this condition as equivalent to a threat of invasion and by November 1815 was showing an inclination to build up to the American level. Furthermore, there were desertions from the armed forces of each side all along the frontier as far east as New Brunswick, and the British military authorities submitted proof that American lieutenants were beckoning their men into the American ranks. British naval vessels pursued and searched American merchant ships on Lake Erie in 1816 in search of deserters; and Malden was utilized as a control station to intercept vessels passing up the Detroit River. Plainly it was an application of impressment to the scene on the Great Lakes.

Aware of the darkening picture and gloomy over the prospect of a costly armaments race, Secretary Monroe proposed an arms limitation agreement. An Act of Congress, passed in February 1815, had already authorized the President to dismantle the armed vessels on the Lakes, except those essential to the prevention of smuggling. It was a bid from Congress for permanent peace along the border; but the British government missed its significance. It still feared the danger of an American invasion, and the surest way to prevent this, it thought, was to regain naval supremacy on the Lakes. At Ghent the American peace commissioners had argued in vain that the United States was as much exposed to attack as the British colonies, that if the latter were vulnerable from the side of the Lakes American ocean shipping and seaboard cities were a pawn to British sea power in the Atlantic, and that the interest in permanent peace between the two countries ought therefore to be considered mutual.

The American government continued to hammer on this theme through 1816, but without immediate results. The same idea, in fact, had once occurred to Lord Castlereagh, the British Foreign Secretary. He had sketched a plan proposing mutual disarmament on the Lakes for the use of the British commissioners at Ghent in 1814, but events had induced him to pigeonhole it. Now he was deeply skeptical of American intentions. The principle of mutual disarmament was fair enough, he admitted, but it put Great Britain at a disadvantage—naval armament was her only protection against the numerically larger population springing up on the American side after the war. "Lord Castlereagh talks of the great and growing military Power of the United States," reported John Quincy Adams, the American minister, in March 1816. "And one of the Lords of the Admiralty, told the House of Commons that bumboat Expeditions, and pinch-

back administrations: would no longer do, for Canada—That Englishmen, must lay their account, for fighting Battles, in fleets of three deckers on the North-American Lakes—”²

Some of this talk was for Parliament's benefit, though Adams, a keen observer, took it seriously. The ministers wanted to slow the tide in Britain toward economy and retrenchment in the armed forces. Privately Castlereagh was won over to the American proposal, and only ten days after Adams' pessimistic report the minister announced his readiness to de-commission the ships. The Briton was convinced of the practical virtue of making the experiment: the United States held all the natural advantages on the Lakes, and if the British began a building race, it would surely respond in kind. As between gentlemen, he and Adams agreed that neither government, pending a final arrangement, would start any new building, and this pledge was fortified by a written exchange between Monroe and Sir Charles Bagot, the British minister in Washington, the following November. The details were completed on this side the Atlantic, and the agreement was formally concluded on April 28 and 29, 1817, by an exchange of notes between Bagot and the Acting Secretary of State, Richard Rush.

Limitation of naval armament on the Lakes was pledged as follows. One vessel, not to exceed one hundred tons' burden nor to be armed with more than one eighteen-pound cannon, for each nation on Lake Ontario; two vessels apiece of like burden and armament on the upper lakes, and one vessel apiece on Lake Champlain; all other armed vessels on the Lakes to be dismantled. There was a choice of a three- or a six-months' period, in which either government might serve notice to terminate the agreement, and Bagot chose the longer period—it would give Britain a better opportunity in which to prepare her defenses, he thought.

The Lakes Agreement has a firm hold on British, American, and Canadian sentiment as a symbol of one hundred years of peace and as an example of what mutual disarmament can accomplish. We must keep in mind two important qualifications, however: (1) The British government yielded to it only through necessity, and regarded it as purely tentative, seeing no prospect of regaining strategic equality with the United States by means of a naval race. (2) The Agreement had limited application. It did not demilitarize the frontier; both parties were free to build forts and maintain garrisons along the Lakes or on any other part of the border. The Agreement did, how-

² Manning, *op. cit.*, p. 972.

ever, remove the threat of sudden, offensive operations that the presence of a naval force would have facilitated.

It is doubtful if the Agreement had any immediate effect on popular feeling in either country. Elsewhere we have noted that it was common to assume that the two countries were fated to have "war after war" with each other. The American government regarded the territory west of Detroit as exposed to the old Indian-Canadian type of encroachment, and it hastened to build forts from Mackinac Island (Michilimackinac) west to Prairie du Chien in Wisconsin. Happily this program proved to be a work of supererogation, no new threats developed from the Canadian side, and the American West filled rapidly with people. The new posts were gradually evacuated, until by 1836 they were all but empty. For the United States the security question had solved itself.

In Great Britain and Canada, American disavowals of aggressive intentions continued to be taken with a large grain of salt. Evidences were not wanting that the Americans intended, in case of another war, to profit from their poor strategy in the War of 1812. They planned to build a fortress on their side of the St. Lawrence and thus be in a position to cut off the Canadian lake cities from Montreal; and they actually constructed two military roads in the direction of the St. Lawrence with this idea in mind. The British answer to this was the construction of a canal, costing over £1,000,000, to connect the Ottawa River with Lake Ontario. The canal took six years to build, and was opened in 1832. It insured the movement of men and supplies into the interior at a safe distance behind the American border. Other recommendations for the strengthening of Canada, drawn up by the Duke of Wellington himself, were urged by a British military commission in 1825 but failed of adoption. Nevertheless, British regulars continued to be stationed in the provinces until 1870, and in times of crisis between the two countries they received reinforcements.

British skepticism to the contrary, the United States harbored few thoughts of conquering Canada by force. Thoughts of conquest had become snarled with motives of security in the minds of the War Hawks of 1812, but the military failures of that war discredited the notion. James Monroe and John Quincy Adams merit the chief credit for persevering in the arms-limitation negotiations; but the olive branch held out by Congress in February 1815 shows that that body shared their sentiments. Furthermore, the reputation of the Lakes Agreement was strengthened by the approval the Senate gave it in 1818; and it stands unmodified to this day.

Obviously the Agreement does not alone deserve all the praise that has been lavished upon it. It opened no royal road to peace and security for either country, especially for Canada. The outbreak of hostilities elsewhere would most certainly have terminated the Agreement and exposed the Canadians to American military operations. But the Lakes Agreement was one of a long series of successful compromises affecting the vital interests of the two countries. It was followed the very next year by the important Convention of 1818, which continued the principle of dividing the North American continent begun in 1783. The two countries long remained rivals without becoming belligerents, and the idea of "inevitable war," though recurrent from time to time throughout the century, never was realized. The Lakes Agreement made a practical contribution to peace at the time. And it should never cease to be recognized as one of many steps which averted the danger of hostilities and ultimately led to solidarity between the two countries.

CHAPTER 6

CUBA'S ROLE OF BALANCE IN THE CARIBBEAN, 1823-1848

THE LOCATION of Cuba¹ in the Caribbean bears a rough analogy to that of Gibraltar at the entrance to the Mediterranean. Its central location gives it command of the passageways into the Gulf of Mexico. Its intimate association with the Florida coast brought it within the scope of American interest as soon as the United States commenced its encroachments on the Floridas. Jefferson in 1808 regarded Cuba as the next logical acquisition, and President Madison two years later emphasized its relation to American defense. The American government, he pointed out, "could not be a satisfied spectator at its falling under any European government which might make a fulcrum of that position against the commerce and activity of the United States."² Doubtless Madison had in mind

¹ Cuba appears four different times in this volume as a major subject. Its history illustrates admirably the shifting currents of motive in American diplomacy. See chapters 13, 38, 40.

² Madison, *Writings* (4 vols., Philadelphia, 1865), II, 488.

two different aspects of the same problem: the safety of New Orleans and the commerce of the Mississippi, and the freedom of action which the United States desired against the Spanish Floridas. Being the hub of Spanish defense in the Gulf, Havana was intimately connected with those provinces.

In like manner Cuba held in pawn the safety of the inner Caribbean and the Central American isthmus. Like the Mediterranean, the Caribbean is a middle sea: pending the opening of transit routes across the Isthmus, it offered the short route to the Pacific. Britain and France held the chain of islands which reached from the Bahamas to the coast of South America; and the presence of a British cruising squadron, based on Jamaica, gave that nation an ascendancy over all others in the Caribbean. Cuba being in Spanish hands tended to neutralize the advantages which Britain otherwise possessed. The balance of power in the Caribbean-Gulf region rested therefore upon it in 1823. By its treaties of 1818 and 1819 with Great Britain and Spain the United States had secured a dominant position on the continent; but it still labored under distinct limitations upon its power at sea, and these kept its range of influence confined chiefly to the mainland. In Spanish hands the island screened the American coast, but it also barred the way to an American thrust southward toward the Isthmus or the British- and French-owned islands of the Lesser Antilles. All three powers, therefore, found Spanish rule in Cuba convenient for their own protection. It was a natural buffer.

This sensitiveness to the Cuban status quo extended to a possible change by revolution or by attack on the island by one of the new Latin-American republics of the mainland. Generally speaking, the United States and, to some extent, Britain had exhibited an encouraging attitude toward Latin-American revolutions. Cuba and Puerto Rico, whose strategic location was comparable, felt no upheaval at this time, but both the American and the British governments showed Spain they desired none. They both felt that Cuba in the hands of revolutionists would attract foreign intervention and that their best course lay in upholding Spain, the "Sick Man" of the New World. Even such an enthusiast for Latin-American independence as Henry Clay cautioned Spain in 1825 to look to her insular defenses. Clay was then Secretary of State under John Quincy Adams. When hints came from Mexico and Colombia that these two rebel republics would like to attack Cuba as a reprisal against their mother country, Clay frowned on the project and renewed his diplomatic efforts in Madrid to bring peace in the New World so that Cuba and Puerto Rico might be secure. Clay simply followed the policy of supporting

the status quo which Adams had established two years previously when Secretary of State. They both acted in terms of immediate security; but, like Jefferson, neither escaped the conviction that the island would eventually be absorbed by the United States. Adams expressed the current notion of his generation when he likened Cuba to a ripening apple which "cannot choose but fall to the ground."

The jealousies of the three powers with regard to one another really furnished a good guaranty of Spanish sovereignty over the island. At one point in 1824 the British government felt so strongly on the subject that it seemed willing to give Spain a formal pledge of protection. It thought better of this, however, when Spain rejected British advice to make peace with the revolting colonies on the mainland. The power under suspicion in 1824 and 1825 was France; the dispatch of a French fleet to Martinique and the rumor that the Spanish governor had been authorized to invite the French to help him maintain internal order in Cuba lent color to the suspicion. The British approached the French cautiously, first disclaiming any designs of their own on the Spanish islands and then expressing the opinion that each power should separately pledge itself never to intervene. They followed this with a proposal for a three-power agreement to guarantee to the Spaniards their hold over Cuba. France was distinctly cool to the suggestion; on his part Henry Clay at first lent an ear to it but soon backed away on the ground that a guaranty for Cuba would encourage Spain to prosecute her war against her rebellious colonies on the mainland. Both Britain and the United States wanted Latin America pacified—independence for the republics on the mainland, continuation of the status quo in the islands. A confidential paper on file in the British archives reports that Clay seemed . . . very much alive to the importance of any measure that should bind France to the same line of policy and forbearance with regard to Cuba, which was laid down for themselves by Great Britain and the United States; he observed that if France continued to send large squadrons of ships of war to the West Indies, she must expect that in future other States would require an explanation of her objects; he stated that the occupation of Cuba by a French force, would be a just ground of war, on the part of the United States . . .⁸

It is very unlikely that the French had any serious intentions, but the diplomatic activity thus evoked by mere common report measures the anxiety with which the powers watched over Cuba. Distrust subsided for more than ten years, when it sharply revived

⁸ The Granville Papers (London, Public Record Office), confidential statement dated June 12, 1830

in the United States. This time Great Britain was the object. Spain had become deeply involved with the British government over the question of suppressing the international slave trade. In spite of a treaty in which Spain had pledged herself to assist in the destruction of the traffic, the importation of slaves from Africa into Cuba was steadily on the increase. Britain's campaign against the slave trade on the high seas was well known; in America, where the government was falling more and more under Southern influence, it was feared that British zeal and Spanish weakness would combine to bring about a British intervention in the island to enforce the slave-trade treaty.

Here was another reason for American diplomacy remaining on the alert. If not only the African slave trade was suppressed—it was illegal in the United States too—but if Great Britain should take a hand in Cuba and encourage an independent black republic under her protection, as it began to be rumored she would do, the results would be decidedly disconcerting to slavery in the United States. No evidence was ever produced to substantiate the American suspicion; on the contrary, British policy remained unchanged through the years in the desire to keep Spanish authority functioning. But the suspicion kept recurring in the United States for nearly a score of years during the 1840's and 1850's and was reinforced by the knowledge that the Spanish government was heavily in debt to private British investors. John Forsyth in 1840 was apparently the first American Secretary of State to express the fear that Spain might be induced to hypothecate Cuba as a means of paying off her obligations. Eight years later a speech in Parliament by the leader of the Tory party, Lord George Bentinck, advocating such a step caused a flurry of fear on this side of the ocean. Forsyth in 1840 ordered the American minister to Madrid to tell the Spanish authorities, as a last resort, that the United States would intervene by force to prevent any change in the status of Cuba; the preferable course, however, was to prod Spain to meet her obligations to the British so as to give them no pretext for encroaching on the island.

In 1848, President Polk, apparently excited by the Bentinck speech, instituted an important modification in American policy. Signs of unrest were appearing in Cuba, and Polk was one to persuade himself easily that the apple was now ripe for picking. Polk's secretary, Buchanan, advised caution lest war be provoked with England and France over the island; but Polk insisted that the United States make a direct offer to the Spanish government to buy Cuba for fifty million dollars. The offer was duly made through the American minister, Saunders, in Madrid, but evoked only a

rude rebuff. Saunders was told that Spain would rather see the isle sunk in the sea than dispose of it in the manner desired.

The Bentinck speech got far more attention in the United States than it deserved, inasmuch as the man who made it was only the leader of a political party which had been badly breached by a quarrel over a domestic issue. But, in company with reports of British aggressions in Central America and Yucatan, it furnished material for many a high-pitched sermon in the Senate in the spring of 1848 on the need for an extensive American intervention in the Caribbean if American security were to be guarded. The old "fifty-four-forties," the men so bent on crossing swords with Britain two years before over Oregon, showed that they had lost none of their punch. England was hastening "with race-horse speed," cried Senator Hannegan of Indiana, to seize the entire Isthmus. She would take Yucatan and then Cuba and threaten the United States itself. This encouraged Southern senators, led by Jefferson Davis of Mississippi, to declare in favor of an American seizure of Yucatan and Cuba. These "are the salient points on the Gulf of Mexico," explained Davis,

which I hold to be a basin of water belonging to the United States I am ready, for one, to declare that my step will be forward, and that the cape of Yucatan and the island of Cuba must be ours.⁴

This sudden association of Yucatan and Cuba as a common security problem is not to be overlooked. The western tip of the island was but sixty miles from the peninsula where the white people had taken advantage of the chaos in Mexico to proclaim their separation. They sent an agent to Washington, a Señor Sierra, to ask for American protection, and he discovered that the most likely way to get it was to play upon the fear of British aggression. He spread tall tales of the British supplying the Indians of Yucatan with arms to destroy the Spanish race and open the way to the extension of British dominion along the coast from south of Greytown to Mexico. These stories not only quickened the pulses of anti-British Congressmen; they also excited the distrustful Polk to ask Congressional authority to occupy Yucatan with troops at least temporarily. Very much the same forces that had agitated earlier for the annexation of all Mexico as an outcome of the war with that country now advocated sweeping seizures in the Caribbean as the only certain protection against the British.

In the general fermentation characteristic of the United States

⁴ *Congressional Globe*, 30th Cong., 1st sess., Part II, Appendix, p. 596.

at the close of its victorious war with Mexico the question of Cuba was temporarily obscured by the specter of British encroachment on the Central American coast. It was now less a problem of screening the Gulf Coast of the United States than it was of guarding the larger interest in the Caribbean as a route to the Pacific. This was a problem in Isthmian security, and is considered in the group of case studies immediately following this. Interest became centered on events in Central America, where the British actually possessed a foothold.

The plan of Polk to add Cuba to the United States by offering an enormous sum to Spain, a sum far exceeding the modest amounts paid for previous and vaster acquisitions of territory—Louisiana, Florida, and the provinces taken from Mexico—was an important alteration in American policy. It was no longer desirable merely to neutralize Cuba under the rotting rule of Spain, with its greatly expanded position as a North American power in 1848, the United States felt less on the defensive and more in need of Cuba as a stepping stone to empire in the Caribbean and the Pacific. Buchanan, blaming the hapless Saunders for the Spanish rebuff to his offer, showed privately how intense he could be on the subject. "We must have Cuba," he wrote John M. Clayton, his successor.

We can't do without Cuba, and above all we must not suffer its transfer to Great Britain. We shall acquire it by a coup d'état at some propitious moment, which from the present state of Europe, may not be far distant.⁵

This change in view clearly thrust Cuba into the field of expansion problems, where it will be treated under the appropriate classification. Distrust of Great Britain's interest in the island, however, continued to be a current item in American policy and appears to have functioned in partial justification of the American thirst for its annexation. In 1853, for example, the new Secretary of State under President Pierce, William L. Marcy, labored under the sincere though long-standing illusion that the British intended to wield a club over Spain to convert Cuba into a colony of free Negroes. There was no substance to the belief; the British government was by that time definitely concerned over the prospect of some kind of American advance on the island, and the only alternative it could see was for it to continue pressure on Spain to reform its administration in Cuba and meet every just American complaint on its merits. There was nothing the British wanted more heartily than

⁵ J. B. Moore (ed.), *The Works of James Buchanan* (12 vols., Philadelphia, 1908-11), VIII, 360.

to see the island regime reformed and safeguarded under Spain as a check to the American challenge in the Caribbean. The misconception of British policy in this country, however, aided in implementing American policy. The temper of the latter was foreshadowed by an attempt on the part of one of the leading Democratic senators, Lewis Cass, to freeze the Monroe Doctrine by means of a Congressional joint resolution. The resolution was introduced in January 1853, two months before the administration of Franklin Pierce took office, and it was explicitly applied to Cuba. It read:

That while the United States disclaim any designs upon the Island of Cuba inconsistent with the laws of nations and with their duties to Spain, they consider it due to the vast importance of the subject to make known, in this solemn manner, that they should view all efforts on the part of any other Power to procure possession, whether peaceably or forcibly, of that island, which, as a naval or military position, must, under circumstances easy to be foreseen, become dangerous to their Southern coast, to the Gulf of Mexico, and to the mouth of the Mississippi, as unfriendly acts, directed against them, to be resisted by all the means in their power.⁶

Indubitably Cuba ranked first as a factor in American security. Plans might be laid from time to time for plucking the apple; but, if the fruit proved green, the United States could afford to wait. It could not afford to see other possible pickers gather under the tree.

CHAPTER 7

THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR: CONFEDERATE INDEPENDENCE

TO THE SOUTHERN leaders who determined upon independence from the Union in 1861 the most encouraging circumstance was the power of King Cotton. Their confidence rested upon rather exact calculation and not a mere rough guess. Cotton was known to play a leading part in the economy of Great Britain and France as well as in that of the United States. Its manufacture into cloth was the largest single industry in the British Isles, where consumption amounted to fifty thousand bales per week—more than

⁶ Great Britain, *Parliamentary Papers*, CII (1852-3), 79.

the total for the United States and Continental Europe combined. Lancashire, the fastest-growing county in Great Britain, was given over wholly to the trade, while the neighboring port of Liverpool, second only to London, handled both the incoming bales and the outgoing bundles of cotton cloth. Virtually one-fifth of the total population of the kingdom was directly or indirectly dependent on cotton. Though in France the connection between their industry and the Southern crop was slighter, it was by no means insignificant; the cotton industry was one of the richest—the product was one of the largest of French exports—and upon it about 700,000 persons were dependent for their livelihood. Furthermore, when one recalls the fact that at that time American exports consisted largely of raw products from the South, of which cotton was easily the largest, and that the marketing and transportation of Southern products constituted an extremely important part of the business of Northern merchants, bankers, and shippers, one can appreciate the confidence of Southerners in their economic power.

As has been said, careful surveys had been made of the cotton business abroad. Southern politicians from Jefferson Davis down were familiar with the facts; and a firm belief had been built up that either there would be no war or, if the North did resort to hostilities, England and France would soon find themselves obliged to come to the rescue of the Confederacy. Cotton was "the king who can shake the jewels in the crown of Queen Victoria," as one Arkansas planter quaintly put it; as Jefferson Davis expressed it, "foreign recognition was looked forward to as an assumed fact."¹ If England would intervene was hardly the question; *when* she would do so was the only problem. And the commonest forecast in the South was that intervention would come in less than six months—otherwise the British would be faced with a starving population and a revolution at home.

So completely did the Confederates put their trust in this train of reasoning that, shortly after the outbreak of hostilities in April 1861, they imposed their own embargo on the export of the cotton crop. Contemptuous of Northern threats of blockade, they proposed to hasten the inevitable assistance by making the British and French feel the pinch. Recognition of their independence was the price the foreign powers were to be compelled to pay for the lifting of the embargo. Nor was this intended as a bluff. The customary movement of cotton from the plantations to the seaboard practically stopped during the harvest season of 1861, and raw cotton became

¹ Quoted by F. L. Owsley, *King Cotton Diplomacy* (Chicago, 1931), pp 18-20

almost unobtainable despite the fact that actual production totaled four and a half million bales. The Southerners themselves achieved a complete stoppage in the export trade while as yet the Northern blockade had scarcely begun to function.

This fatal miscalculation in logic on the part of the South attests the importance of the subject. British and French intervention in the war meant effective, probably decisive, aid to the Southern cause. Once committed to a recognition of Confederate independence, the European powers could hardly escape taking a hand in the war. The only alternative was for the North to yield without further resistance to the threat of overwhelming superior force. That Britain and France, exactly contrary to Southern expectation, threaded their way through the treacherous shoals of neutrality for four years meant that the United States was free to gather its whole weight against the rebellion. Many cross currents of interest and sentiment eddied back and forth, nevertheless; more than once intervention became a practical issue in Anglo-French diplomacy and the future security of the American Union was vitally at stake.

Logic almost caused the North to stub its toe as seriously as it had the South. William H. Seward, the Secretary of State, who proposed to govern the United States while President Lincoln merely reigned, started with an equally grave miscalculation. Failing to see that the decisive hour had struck, he proposed to raise the standard of manifest destiny on the assumption that the broken parts of the Union would unite in opposing European interference in the Western Hemisphere. Spain, France, Great Britain, and Russia were to be called to account simultaneously, and agents were to be sent into Canada, Mexico, and Central America "to rouse a vigorous continental spirit of independence." If the powers failed to explain to Seward's satisfaction, he would "convene Congress and declare war against them."² True to his ideas of expansion, which were less sectional than those of many of his fellow Northerners, Seward would light the beckoning path of empire as the surest means of allaying sectional jealousy.

Lincoln was not impressed, but Seward, nothing daunted, proposed to challenge Great Britain on the issue of having received commissioners from the rebels. The Confederate government had lost no time in sending a mission to London; if the British government received the mission, it was to suffer a break in diplomatic relations with the Union. Again the President averted the risk of stirring up a needless quarrel with the British; the new American

² Lincoln, *Works* (Nicolay and Hay, editors, 2 vols., New York, 1907), II, 29.

minister in London, Charles Francis Adams, was to caution the British foreign office against dealings with the rebels but not to impose threats, and Mr Adams himself, far more realistic than the Secretary of State, used the utmost tact in conveying the warning to Earl Russell, the Foreign Secretary.

The British government, however, was far from being a stranger to Seward's ideas; he had previously earned a reputation for aggressiveness, and the British feared he would try to exploit his new office for the purpose of provoking a quarrel. The cautious reaction in London to communications from Washington, particularly the promptness with which the Queen issued her official proclamation of neutrality (May 12, 1861) upon learning of the American intention to blockade the South, shows how seriously the British intended to avoid becoming the catspaw of the rebellion. The neutrality proclamation, to be sure, stirred up the bitterest recrimination in the North. By it the British acknowledged the belligerent rights of the South, actually this was merely incidental to their main purpose, the wish to avoid any embroilment with the North over the proposed blockade.

The proclamation hastily honored a blockade by the North over more than three thousand miles of Southern coast, though plans for making the blockade real hardly existed on paper. But by so doing the British government warned its own people and escaped the embarrassment of arguing the case of a British shipmaster who might choose to ignore the blockade. British neutrality met with loud bursts of wrath on the American side of the water. It challenged the theoretical position assumed by the administration in Washington that the war was merely a rebellion in which the rebels had no rights, and it snubbed the popular expectation in the North that foreign nations should give the Northern cause their blessing. Actually a prompt announcement of neutrality was vital to the security of the United States in proportion as intervention became a necessity of the South. In all conscience the British step should have been accepted as a reinsurance policy made out in favor of the North.

Beyond a doubt the strongest feeling in Great Britain was the wish to stay out of the war. As a nation whose power in the Western Hemisphere had suffered successive declines at the hands of the United States, Britain had no cause for sorrow over the breaching of the Union. Lord Palmerston, the veteran Prime Minister, whose long career coincided with many of these declines, was deeply gratified by the break. Both he and the Foreign Secretary, Lord Russell, took it for granted that the American Union could never be cobbled together again; it was merely a question of time before the Con-

federate States would receive general recognition. But there was no need for haste on the part of Great Britain; her true course was strict neutrality until the fortunes of war had brought to pass the inevitable result—a stalemate and the *de facto* independence of the South. Then, and then only, would British recognition be granted. This criterion of a decisive military victory remained the sole guide of British statesmanship for the duration of the war.

To be sure, the wish was somewhat father to the thought. Palmerston particularly and Russell to a degree welcomed the prospect of permanent dissolution of the Union. But the essential reason why the South never received official sanction from abroad was simply its failure to demonstrate its ability to win the war. From Bull Run to Gettysburg the military situation appeared favorable to the South; it was during this period (1861–1863) that the risk of foreign recognition was greatest; thereafter, though the tide of battle rose and fell almost to the end, British confidence in the South slowly but surely ebbed.

British sentiment roughly charted the same course. A fleeting hope that the war might truly be a crusade against slavery yielded swiftly to more calculated impressions, once Lincoln had announced his primary purpose to save the Union. In order to keep the border states loyal, as we know, the President refused to commit the country to the abolition of slavery. The London *Times* could then wash its hands of the matter with justifiable smugness. It remarked:

The real motives of the belligerents as the truth transpires, appear to be exactly such motives as have caused wars in all times and countries. They are essentially selfish motives—that is to say, they are based upon speculations of national power, territorial aggrandizement, political advantage, and commercial gain. Neither side can claim any superiority of principle, or any peculiar purity of patriotism . . .³

This air of studied hostility to both sides soon gave way to professions of friendship and admiration for the South. There were many reasons, as we shall see, why the Confederate cause should win a more favorable hearing in England than that of the Union. The American record in British eyes had been one of conquest and aggression since the days of the Revolution. Relations between the two countries had been particularly tense during the last score of years; as one war cloud had disappeared another had formed on the horizon; the United States had not only absorbed vast quantities of land on the North American continent but had tried to elbow

³ *The Times* (London), May 30, 1861.

England from the Caribbean and had thrust itself aggressively into the affairs of the Pacific. And in the unsavory image of the American which implanted itself in the English mind the Southern slave-owner and filibuster shared the dishonors with his swaggering Yankee cousin of the North.⁴

So far the English had made little if any distinction between the sections. But in the Civil War the Northerner tended to bear the burden of animosity alone. The South was now definitely on the defensive. While the summer was still young Lord Russell convinced himself that the North was bent on conquest; and there is good evidence that a large part of his countrymen felt this to be the case. The *Times* soon found an opportunity to draw an analogy between the Civil War and the Revolution. "By substituting the words 'British Empire' for 'American Union,'" it asserted, "we shall get very nearly the same case of George III and his ministers." The South was fighting for the principle of self-government. "But with the Northerners all is different. They are not content with their own. They are fighting to coerce others."⁵

Instinct and self-interest inclined Englishmen to the side of the South—two American Republics were better than one, and the North was unquestionably the aggressor. The Southern slavedriver faded away in the English mind, his place filled by the cultured gentleman of the plantation, while the Yankee suffered a further invidious decline when the English learned that mongrel European nationals had flocked into the North. Both sides contended throughout the war for the support of English opinion; the South had the initial advantage, however, and kept it until the slavery issue again was injected by the Emancipation Proclamation of 1863. Negro slavery was probably the one great obstacle which prevented the classes in the mother country from giving their hearts to the South; even Lord Palmerston could not do that; he was too much the uncompromising leader of the British antislavery movement. On this subject the English were all "a nation of fanatics," as a Southern propagandist ruefully admitted.

The diplomatic tension between London and Washington, felt rather than expressed over the British proclamation of neutrality, reached a climax over the "Trent" affair in November 1861 and again over the construction in British yards of sea raiders for the use of the Confederacy. In the celebrated case of the "Trent" an Ameri-

⁴ For visual evidence of English opinion, see the cartoons reproduced in T. A. Bailey, *Diplomatic History of the American People* (rev. ed., New York, 1945).

⁵ *The Times* (London), May 24, 1861; September 13, 1862.

can naval officer took from the deck of a British mail steamer the two diplomatic representatives the Confederacy was sending to London. Angry voices rose on the British side: Messrs. Mason and Slidell must be released. But the demand was made in such a way as to give time for tempers to cool in Washington and for the path to be smoothed as much as possible for the return of the prisoners, and according to the standards set up by the United States itself in its dispute over impressed seamen the capture was unwarranted.

The building of armed vessels in British shipyards for the account of the Confederacy entailed a far more difficult question. The Confederate agents and the British shipbuilders collaborated most carefully in advance to the end that the sale of the vessels should conform to law. The test came when some of the ships, including the notorious "Alabama," left their moorings, their armament dispatched in ordinary cargo vessels for assembly at remote points in the Atlantic, whence they subsequently roamed the seas to the grief of Yankee shipping. It was now the American turn for an outburst of wrath. These sea raiders were believed a real threat to the Northern cause; furthermore, it was known that ironclad rams were to follow them from British yards, built expressly for the purpose of breaking the blockade of the Southern coast. Charles Francis Adams, the American minister, tried to convince the British authorities that they were legally negligent if they allowed the sea raiders to leave, the bulk of expert opinion was against him, however, and, since the government hesitated, the first raiders to be completed escaped.

This happened in July 1862, at a time when the possibility of intervention in the war was being seriously considered, as we shall see. Threats of reprisal, even war, came from the United States if further commerce raiders were not prevented from leaving, hints that if the British persisted in regarding the practice as legal they might sometime find themselves harassed by fleets of American privateers brought more grave doubts; and, to conclude the matter, the government confiscated the remaining partially completed raiders. A test case of the seizure in the courts upheld the traditional view of the law: the export of armed ships was no more illegal than the export of munitions or other contraband of war. The government was forced to pay costs and damages for the arbitrary seizure, and the road legally opened in England for the building of more "Alabamas," not to mention rams for use directly against the wooden navy of the United States.

Thus faced with a dilemma wherein if it returned to a policy of *laissez-faire* it would be held responsible for intervention on the side

of the South, the British government saved the situation by buying the rams itself. The whole issue was a most intricate question at law, the few ironclad sea raiders, such as the "Alabama," that did leave British waters showed by their deeds what havoc this new type of commerce raiding could inflict on the enemy; they burned and sank Yankee vessels on the high seas wherever they found them, and terrorized an even larger number into seeking immunity through the protection of the British and other foreign flags. This was accomplished by selling the vessels to British shipping men or by the still simpler legal device of transferring the registry of the vessel. The legal rule is that the nationality of a ship is determined by her papers; if the papers were British, the Confederate vessel of war could not molest the ships. Under the British flag merchant ships continued to operate in the normal way across the North Atlantic between British and American ports, the wartime traffic between the two countries—munitions and general merchandise flowing west, wheat and other grain flowing east—suffered practically no interruption. The commerce raiders did their work at widely scattered points of the compass; and during the entire war they sank one hundred and fifty American vessels, of which whalers en route across the Pacific were proportionately the greatest sufferers. The raids definitely depleted the tonnage flying the American flag, upon the outcome of the war they had no effect whatever.

It can scarcely be doubted that the rams would seriously, perhaps decisively, have impeded the war effort of the North had the Confederate building program in England been allowed to proceed. The rams were ironclad warships with prows protruding from the bow below the waterline; a formidable attack on the blockade could be expected, once they were ready for action. The whole diplomatic controversy with the North consumed upward of a year, from the spring of 1862 past the middle of the summer of 1863. The United States in its protests made little distinction between the commerce raiders and the rams; both forms of aid, it said, were unneutral. But the rams naturally caused far more alarm than the commerce destroyers. The American minister, Mr. Adams, finally told Lord Russell that their escape would mean that Britain was waging war with the United States. Northern newspapers had been breathing war ever since the "Alabama" had escaped. Yet it is not clear that this would have been the result even if the British government had not interfered. The Lincoln administration never made any threats itself, and even Minister Adams when driven to desperation spoke *ex officio*. A country as hard pressed as was the North in 1863 surely needed to

be prudent in dealing with a power whose intervention could have ruined its hope of victory.

On their part the British had a choice between two different views of neutrality, and the road they selected was the safe one: they expropriated the commerce destroyers and bought up the rams. The basic considerations so influencing them seem to have been twofold: First, except for a small ring of pro-Southern agitators, the British people were united against involvement in the war. By 1863 the drift of public sentiment was markedly in favor of the North and more strongly than ever committed to nonintervention. Deeply impressed with the gravity of the issue, the British government decided against running risks. In the second place, the British knew that continued aid to the South in the form of armed ships gave the United States a most perilous precedent for future use—as a neutral in some future war to which Britain was a party, the United States could lawfully take revenge by opening its yards to the construction of sea raiders and other vessels to the account of Britain's enemy. All things considered, it was sound policy for the British to adopt the American view of neutrality. This view, it should be said, was of course set forth in order to shield the vital interests of the United States in the war then going on. The British could have given the South no more practical aid, short of entering the war directly, than to sell more "Alabamas"; the raiders and rams were definitely a menace to Northern sea power. But they also cast a long shadow over the future of British sea power. By falling in with the American view, British statesmanship put its feet on solid ground and averted the untold risks of both present and future.⁶

Out of the many different cross currents working for and against intervention there was one positive drive in favor of it. This was the increasing cotton famine. The South had made an original miscalculation: it had overlooked an abnormal surplus of raw cotton in English warehouses in 1861. The Board of Trade figures for June of that year showed a stock on hand of 1,105,780 bales—nearly half a million in excess of the ordinary. In December, when the "Trent" case was being hotly challenged, there was still a sizable surplus, but by the following summer it was nearing exhaustion. The mills started to shut down in the spring of 1862; by the time the "Alabama" got away (July 29), the situation was grave; and before the end of the year two million persons in the kingdom were known to face starvation. There appeared to be an urgent need for breaking

⁶ Other important phases of British neutrality, involving issues of trade with the South, are considered in Part III.

the blockade. The Southerners had long since despaired of the wisdom of their embargo and were frantically trying to sell their cotton overseas in order to get credits for war purchases; and the depleted stocks in England bespoke the efficiency of the Union navy. Yet at this very time, when Britain could have accelerated her aid to the South to the end that the maritime power of the North might be weakened, she undertook to strengthen her policy of neutrality and was far from living up to Confederate expectations.

The particular form which it was proposed intervention should assume in 1862 was the official recognition of Confederate independence. As we have seen, the Southerners underestimated the difficulties which beset them; recognition was far from the easy certainty that they expected. They sent Mason and Slidell to negotiate with Britain and France, but until the cotton famine grew really grave the Southern envoys made no progress. To be sure, John Slidell, who was stationed in Paris, had the willing ear of Emperor Napoleon III. The latter had an ambition to fulfill in the puppet empire he was encouraging in Mexico, and the breach in the American Union meant more to him than it did to the hard-headed administration of Lord Palmerston. But the French emperor dared not shoulder the hazards of intervention alone; he mistrusted his neighbors on the Continent too much to stake a fresh liability abroad, and not even a promise of a blank check from the Confederate States endorsing his projects in Mexico and Santo Domingo would overcome his timidity. Britain on her part had no ambitions in North America equal to those of the French; she wished no doubt to foster trade and good relations with Latin America and to protect her Canadian colonies, but she had no annexation projects or puppet regimes in view. Only the misery of the cotton famine, far worse in Britain than in France, could persuade her to consider the chances of recognition seriously.

Plans began to take shape in the summer of 1862, at the time when the controversy over the commerce destroyers was hottest. The idea was to unite with France in an offer of mediation to both sides on the basis of a cessation of hostilities and of permanent separation for the South. Palmerston set forth the possibilities in September. He wrote Gladstone:

If both [North and South] declined, we must of course leave them to go on, if the South accepted and the North declined we should then I conceive acknowledge the Independence of the South, but we ought, Russell and I imagine, to declare the maintenance of our Neutrality even in the Case of our acknowledging the Independence of the South . . . It looks as if matters were rapidly coming to a Crisis and perhaps we

may have to make the move earlier than the Middle of October. A great Battle appeared by the last accounts to be coming on. If [General] Maclellan is badly defeated the Federal Cause will be manifestly hopeless . . .⁷

The Emperor of the French eagerly agreed to this plan, he even volunteered to have his ironclads assist in breaking up the blockade, if necessary, but irresolution continued to mark the British Cabinet. Some were opposed outright to any move. Then Palmerston decided to invite Russia to join in the mediation and to build up a European front of five powers before taking action. Whatever the prospects of success for such a combination, it does not appear that they were explored. Not even the favorable showing made by the Democrats, who were the appeasement party in the North, could overcome the British reluctance to act, the results of the elections in October and November revealed a growing dissatisfaction with the war in the North. This made a considerable impression in England, Gladstone, for one, urged immediate action lest the opportunity be lost for promoting a favorable peace for the South. But Palmerston, Russell, and others were still more affected by the turn the military situation had taken. On September 16 at Antietam, General Lee, commander-in-chief of the Confederate forces, had spent his strength in a vain endeavor to cross the Potomac and invade Maryland. The British government shrewdly concluded that any attempt now on its part to stop the war would lead only to its own entanglement. *The Times* in an editorial of November 13, 1862, no doubt reflected the general opinion. It said:

We are convinced that the present is not the moment for these strong measures. . . . We quite agree . . . that it would be cheaper to keep all Lancashire on turtle and venison than to plunge into a desperate war with the Northern States of America, even with all Europe at our back. In a good cause, and as a necessity forced upon us in defense of our honour, or of our rightful interests, we are as ready to fight as we ever were, *but we do not see our duty or our interest in going blindfold into an adventure such as this*. We very much doubt, moreover, whether if Virginia belonged to France as Canada belongs to England, the Emperor of the French would be so active in beating up for recruits in this American mediation league.⁸

⁷ The confidential correspondence between the British ministers on the subject is printed in Philip Guedalla, *Gladstone and Palmerston* (New York and London, 1928), pp. 232-47.

⁸ I have italicized one clause in order to emphasize the essential reason for nonintervention.

Thus the cotton famine alone was far from furnishing a sufficient incentive for British intervention in the war. There were elements in the cause of Confederate independence that appealed to the sympathies and the national interest of Great Britain, particularly was there the immediate advantage of restoring the life line of the cotton trade. None of these arguments was convincing; there was nothing in Confederate independence that was vital to Britain or even to France. The subject of intervention was renewed from time to time after 1862, but with little enthusiasm except on the part of a few and with no real chance of acceptance. The Confederate diplomats appeared continuously at foreign courts in the role of suppliants, they had little to offer in the shape of a bargain for Anglo-French support. Recognition of independence was made to rest on the hard realism of a decisive victory in the field that never came. After the battle of Antietam the military situation slowly brightened for the North, antislavery and pro-Northern opinion gathered courage in England accordingly, bolstered by the Emancipation Proclamation and by determined arguments on the part of English political reformers that the North was fighting the battle of democracy.

On its part the North was not in a position to purchase British neutrality. Northern agents spent large sums of money and much effort, some of it of very dubious quality, in trying to create popular sentiment favorable to their cause in Europe generally, in England in particular. When it came to publicity work, however, the Southerners had advantages. Their cause appeared naturally in a better light at the outset, and Southern emissaries were more congenial to the fastidious British than their Northern cousins, the manners and attitude of many of the latter being hardly calculated to win friends. Few publicists of any age, on the other hand, could match the charm and, on the whole, the honest and upright persuasiveness of the Swiss-born chief of Confederate agents, Henry Hotze. This young man, supported by meager funds from Richmond, established and maintained in London a high-grade weekly paper, *The Index*, whose news reporting and editorials drew the respect of the English dailies.*

Publicity, however, was not the determining influence in shaping British policy. The decisive factor was the careful estimate of the national interest by the responsible leaders. Great Britain was in a

* In this brief essay it is not possible to explore the interesting sideline of the public relations work of North and South abroad. Standard accounts of it are given in F. L. Owsley, *King Cotton Diplomacy* (Chicago, 1931) and E. D. Adams, *Great Britain and the American Civil War* (2 vols., London, 1925). A suggestive and not very flattering article on Union propaganda by J. H. Kiger appears in *The Historical Outlook*, XIX (1928), 204-9.

position to choose for herself neutrality or intervention in the American Civil War. At the crucial period in 1862 she hesitated and, after weighing the factors, chose to continue her policy of neutrality. She became frightened by the prospect of an entanglement, the end of which she could not see. She fortified her neutrality by stopping the sale of armed ships to the South, and by so doing increased the chance of a victory for the Union.

CHAPTER 8

THE FRENCH PUPPET EMPIRE IN MEXICO, 1862-1867

THE FLIGHT OF MEXICO in the period following her disastrous war with the United States was a particularly sad one. Violence and bloodshed ravaged the entire country, but nowhere more severely than in the provinces immediately south of the American border. Marauding Indian bands roamed at will across the border from either side against the ranches and settlements of the other. When bands from the Mexican side preyed upon settlements north of the boundary, the losses they inflicted were added to the mounting bill for damages filed by the American government at Mexico City. Scant consideration was given in Washington, on the other hand, to the counter claims filed by the Mexican authorities for injuries caused by Indians from the American side. Likewise nothing was done to restrain the bands of filibusters from New Mexico and California bent on chipping off pieces of Mexican territory and adding them to the United States. In addition to these disorders, and in spite of the general insecurity of life and property throughout the land, numerous Americans and other foreigners found it to their advantage to undertake colonization schemes in Mexico and to obtain land and other concessions from the current dictators. In resulting cases of theft or murder, the claims of these persons or their heirs were added to the general chorus of demands for redress that came with increasing vehemence from foreign governments.

The central government of Mexico was but a broken reed during this decade. Starved for money, and clutching at any straw, the successive dictators stood ready to sell the national birthright to any

eager bidder. Under Presidents Pierce and Buchanan the United States was not loath to take advantage of its opportunities. The principal object of American desire appears to have been the control of all the possible transit routes that Mexico possessed between the Gulf on the east and the Pacific Coast on the west. Thus James G. Gadsden, a South Carolina railroad promoter representing the Pierce administration in 1853, bought outright from the notorious Santa Ana for ten million dollars a block of territory south of the Gila River (now the southern extremities of New Mexico and Arizona) in order to secure the best-known route for a railroad from the Southern States to California. Gadsden also got, among other concessions, a right of transit across the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. These fell somewhat short of his government's expectations, which had embraced the acquisition of all of Mexico's northern provinces as far south as the Sierra Madre Mountains, together with the Gulf and Peninsula of Lower California.

Six years later, Benito Juarez, the full-blooded Indian who was to show higher qualities of leadership than any other Mexican of his generation, was forced to purchase reprieve for himself even more dearly than Santa Ana. Juarez held the port of Vera Cruz, but a rival president at the time controlled the capital. In consideration of four million dollars, one-half of which was to be used to satisfy the claims of American citizens against his country, Juarez ceded three perpetual rights of way, one across Tehuantepec and two across the northern part of the country from the Rio Grande to the Gulf of Lower California. Most striking of all, however, was a separate agreement made by Juarez at the same time by which the United States was granted an unlimited right to intervene with force for the protection of its citizens in any part of Mexico, the Mexican government to bear the cost of intervention. This measure would have delivered Mexico efficaciously into American hands, if carried out. The distracted country was rescued from it, however, by the widening fissure between the sections in the United States. The treaties which Buchanan's emissary procured were rejected in the Senate in May 1860 by a strict party vote of eighteen to twenty-seven.

A year later, when apprehension arose as to the serious plans for intervention that were being matured in Europe, William H. Seward, Lincoln's Secretary of State, returned to somewhat the same theme. He proposed that Mexico be saved from European intervention by a loan from the United States that would liquidate the European obligations, the American government to take a lien on the public lands and mineral rights of Mexico in the northern

provinces. If the loan were not paid off at the end of six years, title to these properties was to pass to the United States. But again a plan for American suzerainty over a large portion of Mexico crashed on the rocks of sectional conflict in the United States, the fighting between North and South had already commenced, and Seward's plan failed even of a hearing.

From 1853 to 1860, therefore, the United States was chiefly concerned with reaping for itself the advantages of Mexican weakness, and was very little disturbed by the prospect of European governments taking a hand. The grievances of European private citizens were of the same nature as those of Americans, and European governments assumed the same attitude in the matter of their redress as that of the United States. No foreign government was inclined to scrutinize critically the values placed by its citizens on the injuries they suffered, nor to be lenient with the Mexicans for the disorders that afflicted their country. The most notorious instance of a European grievance was the so-called Jecker loan made by a Swiss banker to President Miramon, a rival of Juarez. In 1860 Jecker paid Miramon \$1,470,000 and took in exchange bonds bearing a face value of \$15,000,000. The following year he was made a naturalized subject of Napoleon III of France and his claim for redemption of the entire fifteen millions was blandly added to the already large sums owed the Paris banking houses.

Meanwhile, Miramon, desperate for money, broke open a house in Mexico City over which the British minister had officially extended his protection, and stole six hundred thousand dollars which he had formerly deposited to satisfy the claims of British creditors. This and the murder of several British subjects caused the withdrawal of the British minister in 1861, and put the British government in a frame of mind to join in the armed intervention which Spain and, particularly, France had desired for some time. By this time Juarez had secured the upper hand in Mexico, and in July he decreed a two-year suspension of payments on all foreign obligations. This exhausted the patience of the three European powers; they signed a joint agreement in London in the following October to conduct armed operations against the Mexicans. They pledged themselves in the same agreement, however, not to acquire territory or other special advantage and not to bring pressure on the Mexicans to alter their form of government. To all appearances the intervention was to be confined to the task of exacting financial redress.

The distinction was not without a difference. In the first place, the motives of the three powers were not identical, and the extent of

their proposed intervention was influenced accordingly. The British government was most nearly innocent of ulterior designs, financial redress was its principal object, and when it found this to be impossible of achievement it withdrew its armed forces. The British contingent of eight hundred marines was a relatively small force, it was the last to disembark at Vera Cruz and the first to leave. This type of intervention was not regarded in the United States as a challenge. The French had employed it against Mexico in 1838 with success, and both they and other European governments continued to practice it against Caribbean republics on different occasions throughout the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries. In the early stages of the intervention which we are now considering, Secretary Seward laid much emphasis upon the distinction. European nations had a right to make war upon Mexico or any other country, he told them, for sufficient cause, but he added "We have more than once informed all the parties to the alliance that we cannot look with indifference upon any armed European intervention for political ends in a country situated so near and connected with us so closely as Mexico."¹ Seward grasped the realities of the intended intervention. He knew that France and Spain planned an organic change for Mexico for their own permanent advantage, and he appraised the French and Spanish designs as a menace to the security of the United States.

Spain and France both were resolved to use the financial claims as a screen for their ambitions to establish monarchy in Mexico, and they chose the occasion in 1861 because of the freedom they would enjoy from the interference of the United States. "The American war has made it impossible for the United States to interfere," the Emperor Napoleon III acknowledged in October, "and what is more, the outrages committed by the Mexican government have provided England, Spain, and France with a legitimate motive for interference."²

The Spaniards were less single-minded in their plans than the French; the Spanish Bourbons saw in a Spanish prince on a Mexican throne a credit to their own prestige, but though they were the first to intervene their commanding general took the hope of a Mexican monarchy with a grain of salt; he was not slow to grasp the complications of the venture, and in April 1862, four months after the

¹ *US Documents* 37th Cong., 2d sess., *House Executive Document No. 100*, p. 218.

² Cited by Dexter Perkins, *The Monroe Doctrine, 1826-1867*, p. 365. The Civil War in the United States commenced in April 1861.

disembarkation, he agreed with the British commander upon evacuation. Furthermore, when the Spanish found their dreams overshadowed by the greater ambitions of the Emperor of the French, their interest evaporated; they retired to the island of Santo Domingo, where they set about restoring their former foothold among the Dominicans, a venture less difficult but in the long run no more successful than their plans for Mexico.

The case of Mexico in the 1860's is thus reduced to an examination of the impact of the designs of Napoleon III upon convictions held in the United States respecting its own security and that of the Western Hemisphere. Among the strange whims that sometimes mastered the French Emperor was a craving to regenerate the Mexicans. His ideas had begun to take form some time in 1858 under the skillful inspiration of a young Mexican named José Manuel Hidalgo and a small knot of fellow refugees in Paris. These exiles imparted to the Emperor a share of the fanatical credence they gave to the power of monarchy and the Church to bring order out of chaos in their native land. Count Saligny, the French envoy in Mexico, shared their sentiments, and was particularly bent upon extorting for the Paris financial interests their full pound of flesh. Napoleon was loath to make a move without the support of England, however, and for three years the half-formed plan remained undeveloped. The British government showed the utmost reserve toward any plan to intervene; it distrusted the French, but, smarting from criticisms for its neglect of British interests in Mexico, it finally agreed to join in an attempt to extract financial redress.

With the auspices for intervention thus made favorable, Napoleon had no trouble in justifying his proposed venture in terms of the general good. At the time of the London Convention, he stated:

Not only has Mexico attracted much of our capital, and many of our fellow-countrymen, but if it were regenerated, *it would form an impassable barrier to the encroachments of North America*, it would afford an important opening for English, Spanish, and French trade, while exploiting its own wealth, and lastly it would render great services to our manufactories by extending its cultivation of cotton.³

A French force of twenty-six hundred men disembarked at Vera Cruz in January 1862, about a month behind the Spanish one. The

³ Quoted by Perkins, *op cit.*, p. 365. I have italicized the allusion to the United States, which was often referred to as "North America" in European circles, in order to call attention to the weight which Napoleon gave to this consideration. A successful barrier to the United States was as desirable to Great Britain as it was to France.

goal of the French was Mexico City; but an unexpected defeat in May barred the road. By that time the Spanish and the English had left the country, but the French still awaited reinforcement. A year later Marshal Forey entered the capital with an army of thirty-six thousand seasoned soldiers

According to his instructions the French commander was to come as a deliverer, not as a conqueror, appearances at least were to be respected, and the Mexicans were to be given an opportunity to acclaim the man whom the Emperor of the French had already ordained for them. The marshal was not equal to this political subtlety, however, and under his orders a "national assembly" of two hundred hand-picked monarchist sympathizers of Mexico City unanimously accepted the man singled out for them five years before at the French Court. Archduke Ferdinand Maximilian of Habsburg, younger brother of the Austrian emperor, was the choice

As great a dupe as Napoleon, though possessing less native shrewdness and worldly knowledge, Maximilian nevertheless had many misgivings. Experienced men, like his uncle Leopold, King of the Belgians, and Sir Charles Wyke, an English diplomat who knew Mexico well, counseled him against accepting. But Maximilian and his charming wife, Carlotta, had long fretted over the idleness forced upon them in their lovely home on the Adriatic; they too were dazzled with the prospects of a brilliant success in Mexico and hopeful of putting a lasting checkrein on the ambitions of the American Republic. After the news of their election by the Mexican "national assembly," there seemed nothing to do but make the venture.

Not flattering to Napoleon III is the fact that by April 1864, when the final arrangements were made with the archduke, the French Emperor had already begun to lose confidence in the venture. "I realize that I have got myself into a tight place," he told Sir Charles Wyke, "but the affair has got to be liquidated." It would have taken a stronger man than Napoleon to extricate himself at this stage. The agreement with the new Mexican Emperor included a pledge to reduce the existing French force in Mexico gradually to twenty thousand by 1867, but, it was also stipulated, "however events in Europe might turn out, the assistance of France should never fail the new empire."⁴ In addition, Maximilian bound his adopted country to pay the chief costs of the French occupation; and, in order to secure funds on which to start his regime, he negotiated a new loan in Paris for two hundred million francs, bearing interest at six per

⁴ These quotations are from Count Corti, *Maximilian and Charlotte of Mexico* (2 vols., New York, 1928), I, 287 and 325

cent and offered at sixty-three. Thus, before the emperor-elect even left Paris, new debts, which were never paid, were thrust upon Mexico. The purchasers of the new bonds were mostly French citizens. What had started ostensibly as a debt-collecting expedition ended only in fresh losses for the French government and nation.

Maximilian reached Mexico in the summer of 1864. He had great dreams for his new country. Innocent of a knowledge of Latin-American conditions, he fancied an empire which would absorb the republics of Central America and northern South America and, Habsburg-like, he hoped for an eventual marriage alliance with the Brazilian emperor. This would certainly accomplish the offset to the United States in the Western Hemisphere so strongly desired by European governments. Maximilian got the recognition of Great Britain and the more important of the European continental states, in spite of his patent dependence on French arms. Ever alert to French ambitions, Lord Palmerston, the British premier, for once was ready to indulge Napoleon III to the limit. A monarchy in Mexico would be most welcome to British interests, he declared, and if it succeeded it would be beyond the capacity of the French to control it. In the meantime it would keep them out of mischief in Europe.

The new ruler had hardly grown accustomed to his palace at Cuernavaca before the props began to fall from under him. The French commander refused to take orders, and remained passive in the face of mounting guerrilla activities on the part of the Juaristas. In March 1865 the French took over the collection of the customs duties at the ports, leaving Maximilian both helpless and penniless. Juarez held the northern provinces, and by the close of the year Maximilian could be sure of only Vera Cruz and the capital and its environs. Finally Napoleon III made the decision in December 1865 that should have been made at least a year and a half before, seeing that the entire adventure promised nothing but disaster, he resolved to withdraw his forces gradually but with as much dispatch as was consistent with dignity. Maximilian had the choice of abdicating while there was yet time, but the foolish appeals of Carlotta to his pride deterred him. He faced a Mexican firing squad in June 1867, while she, poor thing, after a heart-rending appeal to Napoleon to honor his promises, went mad and served out a vacuous life in seclusion for more than half a century.

Hints of hostile action had meanwhile begun emerging from the United States as early as 1864. The Juarista representative, Señor Romero, assiduously primed American opinion and joined with army

chiefs on the Union side in schemes for collecting an army on the Rio Grande and enticing Confederates to join in an attack on the French. So long as the war against the South lasted, however, the Lincoln administration remained mute on the subject of Mexico. After the final surrender of the Confederates in April 1865, forty thousand troops were billeted near the boundary in Texas, General Grant in June urged war before the cabinet in Washington, but Seward opposed. The Secretary of State was confident the Mexican empire offered no substantial threat to the United States; accustomed to the shifting currents of international politics, he comprehended the embarrassing position of the French and urged that they be allowed time to close out the adventure. Seward was supported by his minister in Paris, John Bigelow, whose apprehension lest the United States involve itself in war merely for the sake of Mexico and the cause of republicanism in the Western Hemisphere led him to utter a sentiment which would warm the heart of the most extreme isolationist. He wrote to Seward in August 1865:

The abstract folly of making ourselves the armed champion of all or any of the Spanish American States, whose people belong to a different race from ours, who speak a different language, who possess a different religion, and who have been trained under social and political institutions having very little in common with those of the United States, would be aggravated now by the state of our finances, which are likely for many years to tax all our resources to the utmost under the most favorable circumstances.⁸

Bigelow's opinions may possibly have represented majority sentiment at that time. With the exception of General Grant and a few of his brother officers who represented a minority sentiment, there appears to have been little demand for war against France in the United States through the spring and summer of 1865. Having survived a terrible strain of four years' duration, the country generally was too dazed to contemplate hostilities in Mexico immediately. But by November a new leaven was working. "The people," reported the correspondent of *The [London] Times*, "would rather go to war with France than see her remain in Mexico. . . . They would, of course, much prefer that France withdraw peaceably; but if she will not do that they mean to make her go."⁹

This opinion coincides with the actual policy followed by the Secretary of State, who was given virtually a free rein in the situa-

⁸ John Bigelow, *Retrospections of an Active Life* (5 vols., New York, 1909), III, 152.

⁹ *The Times*, November 18, 1865.

tion. Commencing in November, Seward dispatched a succession of notes to Paris intended to impress the French with the wisdom of speeding their departure. Napoleon was advised that his intervention was "disallowable and impracticable," and that the United States definitely could not recognize the regime in Mexico. Seward's next move was to recognize Juarez and to send an army general to Paris, perhaps the better to create an impression. In President Johnson's annual message in December 1865 there was an allusion to the "calamity" that might befall "the peace of the world should any European power challenge the American people, as it were, to the defence of republicanism against foreign interference." Finally, in February 1866 France was asked to fix a definite time limit to her occupation. An announcement of intention to withdraw appeared in the Paris press two months later, and after another year the last French contingent had departed from Mexico.

The extent to which the diplomatic opposition of the United States influenced the abandonment of the French puppet empire in Mexico is one of the imponderables. The sequence of events in Mexico and France indicates that Napoleon had tired of his adventure previously and that voices in France calling for a retreat had already made their weight felt. Already involved in another European intrigue, he reacted uneasily to Seward's diplomatic gestures; though the decision to withdraw had been made before the American Secretary of State assumed a decisive tone, the latter seems to have helped speed the departing guest.

As a problem in American security, Maximilian's French-supported empire never assumed serious proportions, though the intention certainly had been to make it formidable. It was actually too doubtful a structure to be a menace to anything except itself. But to an increasing degree its presence offended the popular sensibilities in the United States which made up the body of the Monroe Doctrine. This was due as much to an assumption that the Western Hemisphere was the American oyster as it was to apprehension regarding the security of the United States. The Mexican empire was a challenge to the Monroe Doctrine in its larger implications, even more perhaps than it was to the continental security of the United States.

[†] Richardson, *Messages and Papers*, VIII, 3566.

CHAPTER 9

THE DEFENSE OF NORTH AMERICA,
1940-1945: PARTNERSHIP WITH CANADA;
BRITISH ATLANTIC ISLAND BASES;
OCCUPATION OF GREENLAND AND
ICELAND

PARTNERSHIP WITH CANADA

THE RISE OF HITLER in Europe, in more recent times, and the coincident menace of Japan in Asia induced the American government to plan for the development of three separate but interlocking systems of security. One was global, involving solidarity with Britain and France and encouragement to China; the second was hemispheric, entailing the reconciliation and appeasement of Latin America; the third was focused more strictly on the continent of North America and meant the formation of an active partnership with the Dominion of Canada. The first of these three was fundamental. If the waves of world conquest then forming in Europe and Asia were to be broken, the task had to be accomplished through the resistance of nations near the battle line. This was the most ambitious and difficult of the three projects, and implied nothing less than the revival and perfection of the system of collective security rough-shaped in 1918. It was realized in large part by the passage of the Lend-Lease Act in March 1941, but went into full operation only after the United States itself had been attacked at Pearl Harbor nine months later.

The development of an inter-American system of security, to confront German influence and aggression in the weak countries of Latin America, commenced at a conference held in Montevideo in 1933. The essence of this plan was to persuade the Latin-American republics to accept the leadership of the United States and to cooperate voluntarily with it in whatever steps became necessary for the common defense. By such a system the United States would gain two objects. It would be reassured of the safety of its southern approaches, and it would be in a position to make the Monroe Doctrine work. Since this project conformed to fond tradition in the United States, it was rewarded with enthusiastic popular support at home, the difficulties it encountered lay outside of the United States, and

involved the careful wooing of South America. There its success was conditioned, at least in part, by the appraisal the South American countries put on Hitler's chances of success in Europe.¹

The formation of a partnership with Canada, followed by the establishment of bases on the British islands off the North American coast and subsequently on Greenland and Iceland, was distinctly a new venture in American security. The United States is traditionally indifferent to its northern flank. Canada and the North Atlantic Ocean have been so firmly British and, since the war of 1812, so obviously nonaggressive toward the United States that they have needed no attention. It was not until 1936, when misgivings began to be felt in Washington over the ability of the British Empire to hold its ramparts, that feelers were put out for an understanding with the Dominion. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt then issued an indirect warning that the United States would defend Canada—such a warning he had issued the same year with reference to South America. "We can and will defend ourselves and defend our neighborhood," he exclaimed. Personal visits exchanged by him with the Canadian prime minister, Mr. Mackenzie King, followed that declaration. When correlated with the activities of the United States in Latin America, these conversations could be appraised as part of a grand design to promote a co-operative system that would function in the Western Hemisphere from pole to pole. Their importance was suddenly thrust into the foreground by President Roosevelt himself. In August 1938, he issued a bold manifesto to the Canadian people. "The Dominion of Canada," he declared at Kingston, Ontario, "is part of the sisterhood of the British Empire. I give to you assurance that the people of the United States will not stand idly by if domination of Canadian soil is threatened by any other empire."²

The President's speech had two effects. The American people had been taught by tradition to be sensitive to the safety of the Caribbean and the Panama Canal. They were now to learn that, if Britain's integrity in the North Atlantic were questioned, the United States could be made fully as vulnerable from the direction of the St. Lawrence. The speech was a part of the re-education of the American public in foreign affairs, and was as important for its effects on this side of the border as on the Canadian. The St. Law-

¹ The problems of hemispheric and global security, with which this study must be integrated, receive consideration below.

² Text of address in Shepard Jones and Denys P. Myers, *Documents in American Foreign Relations*, I (Boston, 1939), 23-26.

rence was a great and natural highway to the interior of North America. By means of it the French had once pierced the continent. It was beyond argument that the river must remain in Canadian hands.

In the second place, the speech suggested the contrast between the position of Canada and that of the Latin-American republics. Like them the Dominion was independent, but she was also a member of the British Commonwealth. No one expected her to remain neutral in case of a war involving the rest of the Empire. Mr. Roosevelt encouraged her to keep alive her British connections, to share in the defense of the Empire. In the previous war the Canadians had been unaffected by fears for their continental safety; German power had not reached that far. In 1938 they shared the general uneasiness over the future. The President's speech therefore belongs to the larger field of global security which the American government was trying to promote, it tended to assure the Canadians that they could afford to take chances with their national safety in another grapple with Germany. When in the following spring the King and Queen paid a state visit to both Canada and the United States and were received with great cordiality in this country, the knot was pulled tighter.

The sequence of events seems to indicate that the American gesture was meant chiefly to stiffen resistance to Hitler. It must be correlated with the increasing disposition to challenge the German tyrant. True to form, Canada entered the war in September 1939 and put her major efforts into aiding Britain rather than into home defense. The crashing German victories of May and June, 1940, however, and the possibility that Great Britain would succumb to a fate like that of France forced the Canadians, like the United States itself, to reconsider their position. For the time being at least, attention had to be paid to the danger of the war sweeping to this side of the Atlantic. The United States government showed that it too valued the integrity of Great Britain but was far from neglecting the needs of continental security. It was now almost as interested in military co-operation with Canada as it was in securing offshore island bases in the Atlantic.^a With the British government it reached an agreement respecting the Atlantic islands; with the Canadian Prime Minister President Roosevelt held a personal conference at Ogdensburg, New York. On August 18, 1940, the two leaders issued the following statement.

^a See below, p. 133

The Prime Minister and the President have discussed the mutual problems of defense in relation to the safety of Canada and the United States.

It has been agreed that a Permanent Joint Board of Defense shall be set up at once by the two countries

This Permanent Joint Board of Defense shall commence immediate studies relating to sea, land, and air problems including personnel and matériel.

It will consider in the broad sense the defense of the north half of the Western Hemisphere.⁴

Execution of this agreement was swift. No one knew at the time how soon the North American continent would itself be exposed to Nazi attacks. The Permanent Joint Board was therefore set up, and convened for its preliminary meeting only eight days after the conference at Ogdensburg. It had eleven members organized into two national sections, six in the American section and five in the Canadian. The chairman and one other member of each section were civilians, the remaining seven represented the several branches of the armed services. Meetings at Boston and Halifax in October stressed the immediate importance of defending the Atlantic Coast, but the next month the Board moved to San Francisco and from thence north to Seattle, Victoria, and Vancouver. Its proceedings, to be sure, have been kept secret, but its overt actions seem to indicate an interest chiefly in problems of coastal defense. Just how, if at all, the work of the Board was co-ordinated with the larger problems of battling the submarine in the Atlantic and keeping the seas open has remained confidential. Both nations put far more stress on these problems than they did on mere offshore defense. Canada had already mustered all of her destroyers to aid the British in the English Channel, and in September the United States transferred fifty of its destroyers for the same purpose. The island bases received in return, furthermore, screened the North American coast from the Gulf of St. Lawrence south and obviously furnished better protection in case of direct attack than coastal defenses could provide.

Whatever temporary fears were harbored in the summer of 1940 for the safety of the coast were repressed in favor of a vigorous prosecution of the war on the Atlantic. Clearly the open sea was the best defense, not the coast itself. Without recognition of this primary fact, discussion of a Canadian-American partnership for defense of the continent is mere talk without meaning. The British-

⁴ Text in Jones and Myers, *op. cit.*, III (Boston, 1941), 160.

American exchange of island bases for destroyers rightly shifted attention away from the Ogdensburg Agreement. Legal technicalities of peace and war to the contrary, the United States was a member of a North Atlantic triangle of English-speaking powers with a historic interest in the control of the North Atlantic seaway. The other two members of the triangle—Britain and Canada—were battling for their very lives. Once German submarines succeeded in cutting the lifeline between them, the United States like Canada would lose all the advantages of a natural defense system. The destroyer deal was the first of a long succession of acts which were to make Washington the operating center of the greatest war in history; and, long before the Japanese blow at Pearl Harbor in December 1941, American efforts were bent principally on winning the Battle of the Atlantic.

Meanwhile Canada and the United States teamed together in a fashion unknown to history. Fighting the Battle of the Atlantic became their joint special province, the United States Navy sharing the tasks of patrol and convoy commencing in the summer of 1941. The Royal Canadian Navy was built especially for this sort of work, supplemented by an air force of almost 200,000 men. Before the close of the war Canada could boast of being in tonnage the third largest naval power in the world. She was doing most of the conveying in the North Atlantic. Her navy comprised five hundred ships with a personnel exceeding 90,000 men. Moreover, a Canadian Joint Staff mission, set up in Washington in 1942, co-ordinated Canada's war effort with that of the United States and of the other allies. Canadian and American soldiers served jointly in Newfoundland, Iceland, and Alaska; Canadians took an active part in the recapture from the Japanese of Kiska in the Aleutians; and a joint special training service eliminated all but the formalities of national differences between them.⁶

Not less important was the integrated program of economic co-operation worked out by the two countries. The starting point was a declaration issued by President Roosevelt and the Canadian Prime Minister at Hyde Park, New York, on April 20, 1941. The declaration followed the passage of the Lend-Lease Act and announced the

⁶ Elizabeth H. Armstrong, "Canadian-American Cooperation in War and Peace, 1940-1945," United States Department of State, *The Department of State Bulletin*, XIII, (No. 331 [October 28, 1945]), 674-78. Hereafter cited as *The Department of State Bulletin*. See also the excellent booklets in the *Canada at War* series issued by the Wartime Information Board of Canada. This series furnishes a month by month record of the Canadian war effort, with illustrations and detailed graphs.

intention of the two nations to pool their resources for the winning of the war. It declared

Among other important matters the President and the Prime Minister discussed measures by which the most prompt and effective utilization might be made of the productive facilities of North America for the purposes both of local and hemisphere defense and of the assistance which, in addition to their own programs, both Canada and the United States are rendering to Great Britain and the other democracies.⁶

As Mackenzie King himself explained a few days later to the Canadian House of Commons: "The Hyde Park Declaration is more than an extension of the Ogdensburg Agreement for hemispheric defense. It is also a joint agreement between Canada and the United States for aid to Britain."

The basic principle of the declaration was co-operation in production, each country to "provide the other with the defense articles which it is best able to produce," and to co-ordinate its production program with the other. Canada, Mr. King continued, could supply the United States not only with quantities of metals but also with certain types of clothing, timber products, and certain secret devices, the fruit of the Canadian war experience. In return she could depend upon the United States for aircraft engines and many other types of specialized equipment that she could not produce economically herself.

To make the Hyde Park Declaration effective the two governments added three new joint organizations during 1941: the Materials Co-ordination Committee, the Joint Economic Committees, and the Joint Defense Production Committee. These in turn were linked with a group of Combined Boards, set up in 1942-43 to merge the production programs of the United States and the United Kingdom. For the sake of winning the war the economies of the three North Atlantic powers became virtually as one.⁷ The duties of the Combined Boards were to see that stockpiles of needed items were accumulated and placed in a pool for the use of all the United Nations, to work out methods of distribution among the United Nations, and to study the requirements of each and decide upon an efficient and equitable allocation of the supplies.

Meanwhile, independently of the United States, Canada had matured her own system of lend-lease to Britain. The cancellation

⁶ Jones and Myers, *op cit*, pp. 161-62.

⁷ Courtney C. Brown, "The Combined Boards," *The Department of State Bulletin*, XIII (No. 314 [July 1, 1945]), 17-20.

in 1941 of a billion dollars of indebtedness due from the United Kingdom placed the system on a complete ability-to-pay basis there-after the United Kingdom was to reimburse the Canadians only to the extent that it could accumulate Canadian dollars. At the same time the Dominion rejected lend-lease aid herself from the United States, choosing to settle her accounts through the ordinary channels of trade. To make this practicable, of course, American purchases of Canadian raw materials had to balance approximately, in cash value, the Canadian demand for American military equipment, and, partly to meet this emergency but also to ease the strain on its own resources, the United States agreed to increase its Canadian business.

One of the most striking phases of Canadian-American co-operation occurred in the building of staging routes across the Canadian Northeast and Northwest. Very little is known of the first one. It consisted of a string of air bases extending through Quebec Province and Labrador and on through Greenland and Iceland. It appears to have been completed in 1941, and it may well have been one of the pioneer achievements of the Permanent Joint Defense Board. The result was a direct airline from the northeastern United States over the North Atlantic, Iceland serving as the junction for routes diverging to Soviet Russia, the British Isles, and the Mediterranean. The Northwest Staging Route is better known, the Defense Board having placed less stress on secrecy in connection with it. First came a chain of air fields extending from Edmonton through the Peace River country and on to Whitehorse and Fairbanks for the accommodation of heavy military and transport planes. The construction of a great highway linking these fields together and furnishing a service route into Alaska turned into an epic achievement in 1942. The road was the first direct all-land route to the northwestern corner of the continent, a pioneer trunk line which could later be used toward the development of the Northwest. The region had possibilities as a resettlement area for people made homeless by the war, and in January 1943 the Joint Economic Committees announced a project for opening up one million square miles in Alaska, British Columbia, and Yukon Territory to be served by new branches of the Alcan Highway. Such an enterprise could best be promoted co-operatively, it was believed, and without regard to national boundaries.^a

In this and other ways the signs pointed in the direction of permanent joint help and co-operation between Canada and the United

^a A stimulating discussion of this subject is to be found in Benjamin H. Kizer, *The U.S.-Canadian Northwest* (Princeton, New Jersey, 1943).

States. On November 30, 1942, formal notes were exchanged to this effect. They declared:

Our two governments are engaged in a cooperative undertaking, together with every other nation or people of like mind, to the end of laying the basis of a just and enduring world peace, securing order under law to themselves and all nations

They have agreed to provide mutual aid, both in defense and economic matters, through the Ogdensburg and Hyde Park agreements and subsequent arrangements. They are in agreement that post-war settlements must be such as to promote mutually advantageous economic relations between them and the betterment of world-wide economic relations

To that end the Governments of the United States of America and of Canada are prepared to co-operate in formulating a program of agreed action, open to participation by all other countries of like mind, directed to the expansion, by appropriate international and domestic measures, of production, employment and the exchange and consumption of goods, which are the material foundations of the liberty and welfare of all peoples; to the elimination of all forms of discriminatory treatment in international commerce, and to the reduction of tariffs and other trade barriers.

Furthermore it was agreed to enter into conversations at an early date between themselves and with other United Nations on methods of achieving these objectives. Canada and the United States, it was asserted,

will seek to furnish to the world concrete evidence of the ways in which two neighboring countries that have a long experience in friendly relations and a high degree of economic interdependence, and that share the conviction that such reciprocally beneficial relations must form a part of a general system, may promote by agreed action their mutual interests to the benefit of themselves and other countries.⁹

In such language the two countries dedicated themselves to the task of blazing the trail toward a sounder system of world security in the future. To this end they not only had their experience under the Hyde Park Declaration of 1941, but they could also invoke the world-wide system of pooling that was being worked out contemporaneously under the Lend-Lease Act and the master Mutual Aid Agreements that formed the underpinning of the grand alliance against Germany, Italy, and Japan.¹⁰

⁹ Texts of these notes in *The Department of State Bulletin*, VII (No. 180 [December 5, 1942]).

¹⁰ The Joint Economic Committees were liquidated in March 1944, their functions having been assumed by other agencies of co-ordination. Defense installations built by the United States on Canadian soil were during the same year

THE BRITISH ATLANTIC ISLAND BASES

Until the fall of France in June 1940 the United States gave scant attention to the security of its Atlantic Coast. The security rested on permanent peace with Great Britain, who controlled the Atlantic. Repeated compromises with that nation, and distinguished success with arbitration and other forms of settling disputes peaceably, gradually fostered a tradition of peace between the two countries. The celebration in 1915 of the one hundred years of peace was an occasion for rejoicing over the long, undefended frontier with Canada. With equal pride and as substantial a regard for historical fact, orators on that occasion and later might have pointed to the virtually undefended frontier of the Atlantic. This "frontier" comprised a chain of British colonies extending from Newfoundland, which screened the Gulf of St. Lawrence, through Bermuda, the Bahamas, and the Lesser Antilles, to the Guianas on the South American mainland. These colonies were as old as and in some cases older than the original American colonies themselves; some of them, notably in the West Indies, had been planted in the seventeenth century with the intention of securing a stranglehold on the continent; and during the eighteenth century they did, in fact, contribute to the supremacy and solidarity of the British Empire from Hudson Bay to Venezuela.

The American Revolution had broken that temporary solidarity; the former thirteen colonies on the mainland had become independent, but Canada and the island colonies had kept their original allegiance. The position of the British in Canada, we recall, was the occasion for great uneasiness during the early years of the American Republic. Nothing comparable to this feeling ever developed in the United States with respect to the offshore colonies in the Atlantic. The British continued to use these outposts as bases for a small cruising squadron engaged in police work; they were helpful in maintaining a nominal supremacy over Caribbean waters during the nineteenth century; but even this was terminated in 1903 after Britain had resigned her advantages with respect to an Isthmian canal. Thereafter all of the British colonies in American and Caribbean waters were hostages to Anglo-American goodwill. They were merely silent partners in the general system of Atlantic security which

taken over by the Canadian government, which made appropriate financial reimbursement. Capital improvements along both the Northeast and the Northwest Staging Routes were included in this settlement. See Arthur P. Whitaker (ed.), *Inter-American Affairs 1944 An Annual Survey No. 4* (New York, 1945), pp 87-91.

rested on the good understanding between the two countries. The United States meanwhile tightened its grip on the Caribbean, in a sense it coveted the superior position of the British West Indian islands which stretched like a boom chain across the entrances to that sea, but it displayed no aggressive design upon them. So long as good neighborliness prevailed on the high seas, and so long as no hostile European combination arose to threaten the existing order, the United States had no ground on which to be covetous.

The debacle in France in 1940 and the exposure of Great Britain to direct invasion by Germany alter this long-standing system of American security. The Germans were promptly warned against tampering with the French colonies on this side of the ocean, but had their expected invasion of Britain succeeded, the status of Britain's colonies, so numerous and so well situated for aggressive action against the mainlands of both continents, would have constituted an extremely grave embarrassment to the United States. To ignore the fate of the British islands, to leave their defense solely to the hard-pressed mother country would have been an extraordinary error on the part of American diplomacy.

The chief goal of the United States in 1940 was to reinforce Great Britain herself—to see, if possible, that the Germans did not crash the main bastion of the Atlantic. We examine this phase of the matter elsewhere. It was a practical problem of keeping the sea lanes open against marauding submarines and aircraft. The most urgent need of the British navy was for a reinforcement of destroyers, the United States had over a hundred of these, left over from the First World War, which it had but recently reconditioned for service; public agitation for the transfer of at least fifty of these to the White Ensign developed in July, and the transaction was concluded by an executive agreement on September 2. All eyes were turned for the moment to the sensational spectacle of a supposedly neutral country turning over some of its warships to a belligerent. But the transfer was not a free gift: the British government in return made available to the United States the right to select locations in six of its colonies in the Caribbean and Guiana for the development of naval and air bases. American experts, working in co-operation with British, were to select such sites as they needed in the Bahamas, Jamaica, St. Lucia, Antigua, Trinidad, and British Guiana. These bases were to be granted in terms of a ninety-nine-year lease, free from all rent and charges and subject only to compensation by the United States to private property owners who might be affected. The United States was to have full rights and authority

over the bases it established, but they were not to pass under its sovereignty. In addition to these six bases, forming the *quid pro quo* for the destroyers, the British government granted "freely and without consideration" an unlimited lease to bases on the southern shore of Newfoundland and on the Great Bay of Bermuda. These two outposts provided direct protection for the great seaports of the United States and Canada. The grant of the Newfoundland base was the cause of some irritation among Canadians for having failed to take over this outpost themselves.

In his report to Congress President Roosevelt quite naturally emphasized the bases rather than the destroyers. The acquisition of the former, he declared, "is an epochal and far-reaching act of preparation for continental defense in the face of grave danger." And, he added with considerable truth, this "is the most important action in the reinforcement of our national defense that has been taken since the Louisiana Purchase. Then, as now, considerations of safety from overseas attack were fundamental." He continued.

The value to the Western Hemisphere of these outposts of security is beyond calculation. . . . They are essential to the protection of the Panama Canal, Central America, the Northern portion of South America, the Antilles, Canada, Mexico, and our own Eastern and Gulf Seaboards. Their consequent importance in hemispheric defense is obvious.¹¹

With little delay the United States proceeded to carry out the purposes of this important transaction. Although, like the Louisiana Purchase, it was made by the President on his own responsibility, Congress showed scant disposition to criticize and readily voted the sums needed for the expensive installations the Navy planned for the British islands. Far greater attention was lavished upon them, in fact, than had ever been paid to the naval bases the United States itself possessed in the Caribbean. It was proof that the country was at last alert to the importance of sea power in the defense of the hemisphere.

OCCUPATION OF GREENLAND AND ICELAND

On April 9, 1940, Germany made a sudden dash for the control of the North Atlantic. She occupied Denmark and simultaneously swept up through Norway, leaving nothing unoccupied between Oslo, the capital in the south, and Narvik, an important point for the shipment of iron ore in the north. The two Scandinavian countries were stunned into surrender. The Danes submitted without a

¹¹ *The Department of State Bulletin*, No. 63 (September 7, 1940), Vol. III.

struggle, the Norwegians resisted stoutly, but Quisling plots within their ranks ruined their slight chances against overwhelming numbers and they formally capitulated on June 9.¹² A hastily organized British effort to dislodge the Germans from the coast likewise resulted in failure; subsequent British occupation of the Faeroes and of Iceland afforded some check, but clearly was no real impediment to German operations over and under the sea from Norwegian ports. The effects of the Nazi invasion were not slow in coming; sinkings of Allied merchant ships increased to the killing rate of nearly half a million tons a month in the summer of 1940. When added to the formidable advantages snatched by the Germans in May and June—the occupation of the Low Countries and the French coast—the outcome looked determinable by simple arithmetic, the attrition of British shipping and the eventual crushing of Britain herself.

Moreover, German strategy showed how it might use territory in the Western Hemisphere as a means of hastening this end. The southeast coast of Greenland lay along the flank of the North Atlantic shipping lane; bases established in its bleak harbors would be invaluable for a pincers movement. Signs that this was the intention began to appear in the summer of 1940; three German ships proceeding from Norway arrived off the Greenland coast, at least one of them landed a party to set up a meteorological station in aid of German warcraft at sea. These parties were eventually cleared out, by what means or by whom we do not know.¹³ Nevertheless, the Germans were far from forgetting Greenland; air reconnaissance developed in the fall of 1940, and was repeated in March of the following year. Obviously the United States had reason to be covetous of Greenland. If the Nazis got a foothold there, they could carry the war to Canadian soil, Labrador, Hudson Bay, Quebec, Newfoundland, each presented a broad stage for further ventures.

For exactly a year the United States took no drastic action—at least not openly. It contented itself with establishing a consulate at Godhavn, the capital of Greenland, three weeks after the German occupation of Denmark, and it reassured the local population that

¹² Vidkun Quisling was the infamous Norwegian traitor who helped sell out his country to Hitler and was rewarded by being made the German tyrant's deputy. His name rapidly became an adjective to describe the "Trojan horse" type of betrayal that generally accompanied a Nazi military occupation.

¹³ The recital of these incidents is from *The Department of State Bulletin*, No. 94 (April 12, 1941), IV, 443-44. The phrase "eventually cleared out" is copied verbatim from the official announcement of April 10, 1941. It would be interesting to know the State Department's secret. Did the United States itself dislodge the Germans?

it would look after their needs. If military safeguards accompanied or followed these measures, they were kept a secret. Then on April 9, 1941, the anniversary of the German move into Denmark, the American government signed an agreement with the Danish minister in Washington. Greenland, declared Mr. Secretary Hull, "is within the area embraced by the Monroe Doctrine . . . and its defense against attack by a non-American power is plainly essential to the preservation of the peace and security of the American continent, and of the traditional policies of this Government respecting the Western Hemisphere." For the first time in American history the island was officially identified with the Monroe Doctrine.

The agreement granted complete rights of occupation to the United States. The latter recognized Danish sovereignty but was permitted to do virtually anything as long as the war lasted and indeed longer. When "the present dangers to the peace and security of the American Continent have passed," it was declared, the Danish and American governments would consult together and either one of them might then give twelve months' notice to terminate the agreement. But the remarkable feature of this arrangement was that the Danish government was not even a party to it! Mr. Kauffmann, its envoy in Washington, signed the agreement in the name of the King of Denmark, and then informed the King of what he had done. In effect he behaved (and the United States government abetted him) as though he were the personal proprietor of Greenland. Two days later the controlled Danish government attempted to destroy any such illusion: it publicly repudiated the agreement and ordered Mr. Kauffmann to return home at once. The envoy's response was that he did not regard his sovereign as a free agent and would not honor the summons. Mr. Kauffmann continued to reside in Washington as the recognized minister of Denmark, and in the meantime American troops had taken up their position in Greenland.

The occupation, let us bear in mind, took place in April 1941, one month after the United States through the enactment of the Lend-Lease Law had dedicated its economic resources to the defeat of Germany. The American government explained its act on the ground that it was necessary for the defense of the American continent; the time of occupation, however, suggests the more immediately practical motive of taking up a station highly advantageous for naval and air operations against submarines. The occupation of Greenland would seem to have been intended primarily as a move to secure the North Atlantic shipping route.

Three months later an agreement with Iceland showed further

how the dual motive of protecting the Western Hemisphere from attack and of prosecuting the war at sea against German raiders could operate. Iceland had been under British occupation since the German invasion of Denmark. The British, however, desired to withdraw their forces for more active use in other theaters, and so informed the Icelandic government. The latter thereupon invited the United States to substitute its forces for the British, on condition of an absolute recognition of Iceland's independence and a pledge to withdraw at the conclusion of the war. Iceland dispatched her request to Washington on July 1 and President Roosevelt accepted unconditionally on the same day. One can hardly suppose that the request came as a surprise to the Chief Executive. Six days later American naval forces reached Reykjavik, and Congress was informed of the accomplished fact. Mr. Roosevelt asserted

The occupation of Iceland by Germany would constitute a serious threat in three dimensions:

The threat against Greenland and the northern portion of the North American Continent, including the Islands which lie off it.

The threat against all shipping in the north Atlantic.

The threat against the steady flow of munitions to Britain—which is a matter of broad policy clearly approved by the Congress.¹⁴

In the same breath the President also announced that he had ordered the Navy to take the steps necessary to insure the safety of the sea lanes between Iceland and the United States. Like Greenland, Iceland was a stepping stone to the American continent; but it was also a halfway point on the precious lifeline to the British Isles; and its occupation was another illustration of the identity between control of the seas and the security of North America.¹⁵

¹⁴ *The Department of State Bulletin*, No. 107 (July 12, 1941), V, 15-16.

¹⁵ It will be recalled that the American government at the time of the original occupation gave to the Icelandic government a flat promise to leave at the war's end. But in October 1945 the State Department began a negotiation with the object of retaining certain American-built facilities on the island as a permanent base. The negotiation attracted the attention of the Soviet Union, which was reported to be putting pressure on Norway for the right to set up opposing bases on the bleak island of Spitzbergen. Thus a new struggle for power appeared to be developing in the North Atlantic. The United States, however, so far modified its demands on Iceland that, in a note on September 19, 1946, it offered to withdraw entirely from the island with the exception of the Keflavik airport, southwest of Reykjavik. Here it insisted on the right to use the facilities and to maintain the necessary supporting personnel. See *New York Times*, November 19, 1945, June 19, September 21, 1946.

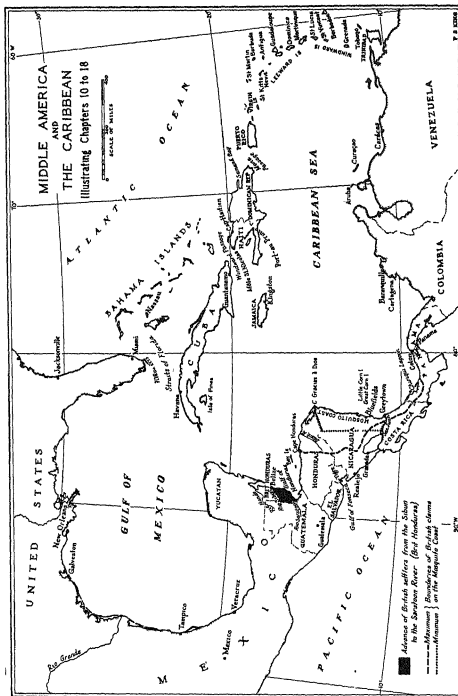
MIDDLE AMERICA

Isthmian Security and Police Power in the Caribbean

SECURITY in the region of Middle America was conceived early in the nineteenth century in terms of American hegemony. This was of the essence of the Monroe Doctrine, to which we have given attention in the Introduction to Part I. The leading power in the Caribbean, however, was Great Britain, and essentially the problem was one of replacing the British system with an American one. The period of substitution spanned the second half of the century, and was marked by two small but decisive wars engaged in by the United States, that with Mexico and that with Spain.

Having acquired the leadership in the area by mutual agreement with Great Britain in 1901, the United States proceeded to implement its security through a police power exercised over the smaller republics. It also took steps to strengthen its strategic control of the Caribbean Sea. Cracks developed in this system, however; Mexico was too large and too resistant to be treated in the same manner as her smaller neighbors; and the reaction from the South American countries suggested that the policy, if continued, might have an effect just opposite to that which had been intended. It might result in inviting hostile European influences into South America as an offset to the United States. Perceiving these possibilities, the American government successfully modified its program of benevolent imperialism into a policy of dealing tactfully with the lesser republics as friends and neighbors. The change illustrates the close correlation between policies of Isthmian security and the larger program of hemispheric solidarity.

The evolution of the security concept in this area is marked by the following instances: (1) the Neutralization of Central America, 1850-1860, (2) the Hay-Pauncefote Treaty of 1901: American Supremacy, (3) The Virgin Islands, 1867-1917; (4) The Cuban Protectorate, 1898-1934; (5) The Dominican Republic, 1905-1934; (6) Haiti, 1915-1934; (7) The Panama Republic, 1903-1943, (8) The Protectorate of Nicaragua, 1909-1934, (9) The Mexican Revolution, 1910-1943



CHAPTER 10

THE NEUTRALIZATION OF
CENTRAL AMERICA, 1850-1860

THE MEXICAN WAR put the isthmus of Central America definitely within the range of American interest. The isthmus appeared to offer the best natural advantages for a route to the Pacific Coast, now deemed indispensable. Of the several possible choices for an isthmian crossing, the one which drew serious American attention was the Nicaraguan route; a combined river and lake system, with which this route alone was blest, furnished what seemed a realizable prospect for a ship canal. The United States was startled at learning in 1848, however, that at least the Caribbean end of this route was already within the clasp of Great Britain.

How could the United States secure the passageway which it had come to consider vital to it? Popular fancy had long dreamed of Central America in terms of a link between the Atlantic and the Pacific, literally nothing, however, had been done to realize the dream. Until 1848 the isthmus was too remote to engage the attention of either the American government or the American people. Their apathy toward political conditions in Central America, moreover, was just as complete as toward an isthmian canal. In spite of the pretensions of the Monroe Doctrine, which seemed to embrace the entire hemisphere, the United States had in practice devoted its energy to making sure of territory actually colonized by Americans. For the time being, Texas, Oregon, and California were big enough worlds to conquer.

Assurance of a transit route safe from British interference or control was only superficially the question which now became the primary problem in American diplomacy. The United States already had a guaranty of the Panama route. This had been offered to it two years before by the Republic of New Granada, which had been extremely anxious to obtain the preference, the initiative in this case coming from New Granada. That republic had for some years been vainly courting the favor of the British; it wanted some great power to take the Panama route under its wing. It finally found its opportunity in 1846, when the United States sent an envoy to Bogotá to obtain tariff concessions; as a price for these it exacted a promise from the United States to protect the Isthmus of Panama

The treaty embodying these provisions was pigeonholed for nearly two years by President Polk, who shrank from its political implications in spite of a forthright public statement in 1845 against European interposition in North America. It took a special mission from New Granada to persuade the American government to accept the responsibilities of the treaty. By playing up the challenge which the British position in Central America offered to the Monroe Doctrine, the New Granadan representative finally secured American ratification of the agreement. Far from showing anxiety to monopolize an isthmian route, however, Secretary of State James Buchanan proposed partnership with Great Britain in its development and operation. He wanted the British government to share the guaranty of Panama neutrality and to help in fostering a private company to finance the construction of a canal. But the British Foreign Secretary, Lord Palmerston, showed not the slightest flicker of interest. Buchanan's proposal encountered only silence.

Always extremely obscure, the interests of the British throughout Central America had nevertheless grown substantially. The period of their great activity was from 1838 to 1848, by which latter date they held the key positions on the Caribbean side. The oldest British stake in Central America was a settlement of logwood and mahogany cutters sprawled along the coast of Guatemala. Theoretically these people were tenants; their government had obtained this status for them from Spain in 1786, and they were supposed to keep within the limits of the Hondo and Sibun rivers. Guatemala, as successor to Spain, was the legal sovereign of the locality. Actually the settlers paid no attention to either Spain or Guatemala; their colony, which they called Belize, was self-governing. Successful mahogany operations had more than doubled its settled area; at least by 1820 they were down as far as the Sarstoon River, and a few of the cutters ventured somewhat later across the Bay of Honduras to the cape of the same name. Belize was governed by a superintendent; its immediate contact was with Jamaica, which was the natural center for British activities anywhere along the Central American coast.

From Cape Honduras south to the Chiriqui Lagoon was over eight hundred miles of practically deserted coast known as Mosquito. Like the territory of Belize, this was strictly speaking the domain of the several republics which had broken from the Spaniards. The people of these republics had preferred the high tablelands of the interior, however, and had left the swampy lagoons of the east coast to the Mosquito Indians and a handful of English traders. Hon-

duras, Nicaragua, and New Granada all claimed a share of the Mosquito Coast, though without agreeing as to their respective portions. At one time New Granada had claimed the whole coast to be hers, though like her sister republics she had no power to make good her claims.

The petty quarrels and incompetence of these states made plausible the fiction nurtured by the British that Mosquito was an independent kingdom, with jurisdiction over the entire coast. Actually the Indians were mostly confined to the vicinity of Bluefields, a place name derived from a Dutch buccaneer of the seventeenth century. They attracted little attention until some English traders and adventurers hit on the scheme of obtaining possession of the coast through the pretense of land grants from the Mosquito kingdom. A clever Scotch rascal named MacGregor got a number of London capitalists involved in such a scheme in 1820 through a fraudulent bond issue which he tricked them into taking. The bonds were supposedly secured by land along the Black River, which MacGregor alleged he had obtained from the Mosquito king. After sending out four shiploads of emigrants, some of whom perished and the remainder of whom eventually made their way to Belize, MacGregor vanished to Venezuela. A score of years later the holders of his bonds, hoping to recover their losses, organized as the British Central American Land Company and got the Mosquito king to grant the same land to them direct. They then invested fresh sums and dispatched three vessels with settlers and equipment; two of the vessels were lost, but a small group of colonists hung on at Black River until 1845.

The Black River grant was but one of several such speculations. There were men from Belize who thought the Mosquito Coast had colonizing possibilities, their plan was to get title from the Mosquitos and then sell their claims to promotion companies in London or elsewhere. By 1841 the entire "kingdom" from Cape Honduras to the Chiriqui Lagoon was a tangle of land grants. The most princely holding was that of the Shepherd brothers, who had lived among the Indians for many years. Their grants embraced the coast between Bluefields and the Chiriqui Lagoon, where the existence of a good anchorage encouraged the dream of eventually selling out to the British government itself.

The superintendent of Belize, an Alexander MacDonald, also had dreams concerning the future of the Mosquito Coast, and his gaze took in the Bay Islands, a small cluster in the Bay of Honduras inhabited by liberated Negro slaves. In 1840 he assumed authority

over the islands on his own responsibility. Their location, adjacent to the shores of Honduras, nevertheless made them a natural link which could be used in welding Mosquito to Belize. With Jamaica as the pivot the Caribbean coast of Central America could be developed into a respectable and important British sphere of influence. To all appearances, however, MacDonald disliked the way in which speculators were stripping the Indians of their lands. Through his prodding the British foreign office stationed a resident adviser to the Mosquitos at Bluefields in 1844. The old chief had died, after granting away all of the tribal lands, and MacDonald wished to keep faith with the young lad whom he had helped to train as the future "king."

The new resident at Bluefields was the former secretary of the community at Belize and probably was equipped with preconceived ideas; at any rate, his first act was to get the "king" to annul all of the land grants made by his father. By this measure the British government officially assumed responsibility for Mosquito, it notified New Granada the same year of its protectorate and thus committed itself to the theory of Mosquito independence. In June 1847, acting upon the advice of his minister to Guatemala, Frederick Chatfield, Lord Palmerston defined the extremities of Mosquito as Cape Honduras on the north and the San Juan River on the south. New Granada was warned away from the locality of the Chiriqui Lagoon because it was thought this country should be given to Costa Rica; and when a faction from Nicaragua attempted temporary occupation of Greytown at the mouth of the San Juan River it was pursued by a small British force sent out by the governor of Jamaica. Such vigorous actions plunged Great Britain into the role of peace-maker and defender of Mosquito independence.

By 1847 the issue had outgrown the mere rescuing of a helpless Indian tribe from the wiles of speculators. The Mosquito protectorate and Belize were henceforth identified with the general problem of Central America. With plans only partly formed, men like Frederick Chatfield were keenly hopeful of realizing a strong, united Central America, dominated by British influence and open to British colonization and trade. A man of long experience in the politics of the Central American republics, Chatfield was the most influential figure and guide in shaping the policy of his home government. His ideas tallied closely with those of Lord Palmerston, who was a thorough disciple of the long-standing tradition that Britain should foster trade and constitutional government in Latin America. Moreover, as Chatfield pointed out, matters were approaching a head in

1847 'either the Central American house must be put in order at once, anarchy and factional strife overcome, and mutual jealousies assuaged, or a challenge from the United States would almost certainly develop. By September Mexico lay at the feet of the American armies; in Chatfield's view it would be there indefinitely; unless properly organized, Central America would be the next victim, and the Nicaraguan transit route would be the particular object of American aggression.

The blueprints of British plans in 1847-48 called for the promotion of a federal union in Central America, especial support for Guatemala and Costa Rica as the most civilized states and therefore the most likely to succeed, the retention of Greytown and the mouth of the San Juan River by the Mosquito protectorate and the impartial administration of the port for the benefit of Costa Rica and Nicaragua, the grant of the coast between the river and the Chiriqui Lagoon to Costa Rica and the confinement of New Granada to Panama; and, finally, the concession of an anchorage for British naval ships by Costa Rica at Boca del Toro on the Caribbean and of another anchorage and island base in Fonseca Bay on the Pacific side by Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua.

The last-named republics were the stumbling block. They were anarchic internally, they were snared in a web of debt to British investors, inherited from the old Central American Federation which had dissolved in 1839, and two of them, Nicaragua and Honduras, nursed grievances over their exclusion from the Mosquito Coast. Chatfield proposed to overcome this handicap by offering alliance and cancellation of debts in return for their recognition of the Mosquito boundaries and for naval privileges in Fonseca Bay. To the extent that his plans could be realized without further recourse to force, he carried the British government with him. "A refitting Station for our Squadron," and a reunion of the Central American republics "in a friendly League and Connexion with Mosquito and our Honduras [Belize]," Lord Palmerston quaintly, if somewhat unrealistically explained, ". . . might give a great Impulse to civilization and Commerce in a Part of the World eminently favoured with the Gifts of Nature."¹ But Palmerston balked at coercion, when Chatfield proposed the seizure of Fonseca Bay, he was curbed. When, nevertheless, he ventured to take forcible possession a year later on his own initiative as an offset to the intrigues

¹ Quoted from R. W. Van Alstyne, "The Central American Policy of Lord Palmerston, 1846-1848," *Hispanic American Historical Review*, XVI (1935-36), 339-59.

of American emissaries in Nicaragua, restitution was promptly ordered

In a nutshell the British objective in Central America in 1848 was to play the role of a good neighbor, stand on the legality of the Mosquito protectorate, but otherwise encourage the republics to lean on Great Britain. It was an unfulfilled objective; only Guatemala and Costa Rica would co-operate; the other republics, cherishing their wrongs, found an opportunity to intrigue with the United States. On its part, the speedy discovery that it was about to be put at a disadvantage in the use of an invaluable route to the Pacific and the indignation stirred by the obvious attempts to frustrate the Monroe Doctrine impelled the United States to make some decisions of its own.

There were two possible approaches open to American diplomacy. One was to intrigue aggressively with Nicaragua and its disgruntled partners, make alliances with them, and recognize the Nicaraguan claim to Mosquito. This would bring the United States face to face with Great Britain over a downright issue, that of forcing a bluff similar to the one in Oregon only two years previously and if necessary precipitating a major war. Agents sent by the American government in 1848-49 to investigate in Central America thoughtlessly chose this road. One of them, sent by President Polk, signed a virtual treaty of alliance with Nicaragua, the other challenged Frederick Chatfield by getting Honduras and Salvador to cede the strategic Tigre Island in Fonseca Bay. All three republics scampered willingly under the outstretched cloak, while the peppery Chatfield countered with the actual seizure of Tigre Island.

Such flourishes impassioned the aggressive-minded elements in the United States, never loath to exploit an opportunity to prophesy the "inevitable" struggle with England for mastery of North America and the Pacific. Furthermore, the Democrats, having lost the presidential election to the Whigs, found the occasion useful for embarrassing the new administration of President Taylor. The sweeping annexations of the past five years had brought the Monroe Doctrine back to life and identified it with Manifest Destiny; since these had been Democratic achievements, the Whig administration, none too strong with the voters, had a handicap to overcome.

But saber-rattling was apt to produce a reaction in the United States, as the Democrats themselves well knew from their experiences in the Oregon crisis and the Mexican War. A contest for supremacy in Central America was not an American need, the most that was required was an assurance that Great Britain did not intend

supremacy herself, and an admission to partnership with her in a policy of canal promotion. If a canal was to be realized, British capital would have to be attracted. No one conceived of a government-owned waterway in those days. Furthermore, the Democratic administration had already committed itself to the neutralization of Panama and had bid for British partnership there. Since the Nicaraguan route had the popular preference, the natural course was to seek the application of the same principle to Nicaragua.

It was not difficult for John M. Clayton, the new Secretary of State, to discover that the British government was willing to admit the United States to partnership on the basis of the independence and neutrality of the Central American states. Palmerston pledged his readiness to enter a mutual engagement "neither to settle, annex, colonize, or fortify" any part of Central America. Whatever store he set by the British "civilizing mission" in Central America, the Foreign Secretary valued an entente with the United States far more. American friendship was priceless when reckoned against the chronic complications that Great Britain had with France and Russia. A contented United States would spell security for British interests in the West, safety for British shipping on the high seas in time of war, and a free hand for the British government in meeting eventualities with the European powers. American desires were really very modest: an internationally free isthmian canal, and a mutual hands-off pledge in the matter of Central American political questions. Since Palmerston's conception of the British relationship to the Central American states had been that of the "good neighbor," rather than of outright domination, it was easy for him to appreciate the American view.

There were obstacles, nevertheless. Britain was too deeply committed to the protection of the Mosquito kingdom to permit her to backwater openly. It was not an easy matter to dispose of Greytown. The United States wanted it handed over to Nicaragua and the "kingdom" liquidated in favor of that republic. But this would amount to outright surrender on Britain's part, a step which would weaken her prestige among Latin-American countries. In the second place, there was the doubt about Belize. It was a community of long standing but without official status and without recognized boundaries; it was not a Crown colony, yet was in a sense regarded as such. Furthermore, its superintendent had been treating the Bay Islands as dependencies since 1840. Palmerston was not willing to alter the status of Mosquito, though, like others, he realized that Greytown would have to be detached from it if any treaty with the

United States was to have meaning; and he was not prepared to make a bargain involving Belize and its dependencies.

Clayton wanted the British to retreat altogether from their positions in Central America but knew they would not; both he and the British representative in Washington, Sir Henry Bulwer, felt that to leave the issue an open sore and postpone agreement over a canal, when the idea of a waterway had especially captured the imagination of the American public, would be a dangerous confession of failure. Britain was willing to sign an agreement neutralizing her interests in Central America; the United States was ready to pledge itself not to make annexations or dominate Central America politically. Mindful of the need of veering away from party politics and of avoiding giving his opponents in Congress an opening, Clayton therefore resorted with Sir Henry Bulwer to an elusively worded formula whereby the two countries agreed that neither would occupy, fortify, colonize, or assume or exercise any dominion in any part of Central America, nor would either make use of any protection, intimacy, or alliance that it might have with any Central American state. The two governments, furthermore, promised to bestow their blessing on any private concern that would undertake to build a canal.

Thus was consummated the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty of April 19, 1850. The agreement gave the United States assurances of security and co-operation in the matter of an isthmian canal; it blunted the edge of a dangerous and unnecessary distrust, and it created a permanent partnership to the end that lasting political peace and stability were to be sought in Central America through joint, rather than single, action on the part of the two powers. It gave the United States treaty rights which it did not possess before—the right to have an equal share in the settlement of the Mosquito question, and the right to agree to any future fixing of the status of Belize or the Bay Islands. The latter two places were left just as they were, self-governing settlements of British subjects on land claimed by Central American republics.

Obviously the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty was a point of departure, an instrument on which to base a program of action. Its success depended on the amount of practical co-operation the two countries would show in settling the problems of Central America. Once the peace of the latter were assured, it was the intention of both powers to adopt a hands-off policy toward the republics. The Mosquito question was the knottiest: it tangled on the issue of disposing of the Indian tribe. Britain took her duties of protector very seriously—her

prestige among the Central Americans was at stake—and she held that the tribe must be given a permanent territory of its own, secure against Nicaragua or Honduras. In other words, Mosquito must remain virtually an independent state. A supplementary agreement was made with the American government on this score in 1852, in which the Secretary of State pledged his co-operation in winning the consent of Nicaragua. The latter was to get Greytown, on condition of paying an indemnity to the Mosquitos.

The Whigs being a lame-duck administration, however, the Nicaraguans, who had long believed that they had wrongfully been dispossessed, cannily delayed their case until the Democrats should come into power. They were encouraged to do so by the vigorous tone of opposition which was already audible in the ranks of that party against the Treaty. "Young America," a lusty group of Manifest Destiny men led by Senator Douglas of Illinois, was deeply dissatisfied because the Treaty appeared to discredit the Monroe Doctrine. To their minds the United States alone should dispose of the fortunes of Central America, they did not reflect on the improvement which the Treaty had made in the position of this country. From merely knocking for admission to a region that had never before been considered important to her interests, the United States had entered freely as equal consultant. The Clayton-Bulwer Treaty had pledged Great Britain against seeking or exercising political ascendancy. But it was not a self-executing instrument; it merely insured that she must share the road with the United States in the future.

Unfortunately for the British government, it made a move at this very time which played into the hands of the enemies of the Treaty and threatened to ruin the chances of a successful settlement. The British government altered the status of the Bay Islands by making them a Crown colony. Apparently heeding the call of the local inhabitants, and governed by the belief that since Clayton had agreed to ignore Belize and its "dependencies" in 1850 it need not consider the islands subject to the Treaty, the British government invited a challenge. As long as the Whigs were in power, the field of discussion had been confined to the Mosquito question. There was nothing to prevent a new American government from broadening the area of discussion so as to include Belize and the Bay Islands—these were parts of Central America—and the Democratic administration of 1853 lost little time in doing so.

Buchanan was made the new American minister to London; he and William L. Marcy, the Secretary of State, divided the honor of

opening a phase of the problem which the British had taken precaution to avoid. The question was fairly posed: since the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty had intended equality between the two powers, how could Great Britain pretend to the right to retain territorial possessions in Central America when the United States had none? The intent of the Treaty was to leave Central America to the Central Americans. Unless Britain transferred her interests to the proper Central American states—Mosquito to Nicaragua, the Bay Islands to Honduras, and Belize to Guatemala—the Treaty could hardly be regarded as a working instrument.

The British were undoubtedly cornered; their position in all three places rested on usage, not on clear legal right; treating an Indian tribe as a sovereign state was contrary to all British as well as American precedent, even granting the permanency of Belize, its boundaries, like those of Mosquito, were open to question, and as for the Bay Islands, it was hard to frame even a plausible defense for the act of converting them into a colony *after* the Treaty with the United States. In short, the British had failed to regularize their position in Central America, as they had hoped to do, before dealing with the United States. It was now too late. In the Treaty the United States had a definite peg on which to hang all three questions, and the Democrats had a good starting point for their own ambitions.

The time chosen by Buchanan was particularly embarrassing for British diplomacy. Britain was now at war with Russia, she could ill afford trouble with the United States. The most earnest consultation took place secretly in the cabinet; for the first time the chiefs of the British government really examined the legality of their position under the Treaty, and they all agreed, including even Palmerston, that it was unsound. The Foreign Secretary, Lord Clarendon, drafted a secret memorandum in July 1854 offering sweeping concessions. If Buchanan had seen the memorandum he would have realized that the objects of his mission had been virtually achieved.

But the memorandum was withheld; London received word unexpectedly of an American naval bombardment of Greytown. This and other signs of aggression by the United States brought a sharp reaction in the British capital, the Pierce administration was known to have territorial ambitions, and its good faith with respect to the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty was doubted. What British statesmen thought they saw was a deliberate attempt by the Americans to exploit the Crimean War not only for the sake of their treaty rights in Central America but for purposes of general territorial aggran-

dizement. Pierce was known to have an appetite for Santo Domingo, Cuba, and Hawaii, he was suspected of trying to make a tool of the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty for reasons of personal popularity, if she appeased him now, in the face of threats and while war was going on with Russia, Britain would convict herself of a deplorable weakness before all the world. Consequently, under the guidance of the Premier, Lord Aberdeen, it was decided to temporize. Aberdeen wrote the Foreign Secretary:

I should think the people of the United States were not actually desirous of quarreling with us; and I would carefully avoid quarreling with them. But I would contrive to hang up all matters in dispute by means of civil negotiations for some indefinite period, and would make no concessions at this moment, if it could be avoided.²

The Treaty meanwhile ceased to function except in a Pickwickian sense. All efforts at concert between the two governments abruptly stopped in July 1854. A new order of violence broke out in Central America with the coming of marauding bands of filibusters from the United States, swarming in from New Orleans, New York, and other American ports and transported openly by vessels plying the regular trade between the United States and Nicaraguan ports, these bands seemed the advance guard of an Americanization of the Isthmus. Few obstacles were placed in their path by the American government, there were even signs of a subterranean connection between them and the administration, and when William Walker, the prince of the filibusters, made himself ruler of Nicaragua in 1855, it seemed futile to talk about the principles of the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty.

Two years of tension between the two countries ensued, a failure at home in the matter of healing the growing rift between North and South, the Pierce administration turned more and more to the expedient of making political capital out of its differences with Great Britain. Unfortunately a fresh weapon was thrust into its hands for this purpose when British agents in 1855 canvassed the country for recruits to fight in the Crimean war. The administration was able to make out such a good case against the British minister in Washington, John F. Crampton, for violating American neutrality that it expelled him from the country. Pierce used this and the charge of flagrant violations of the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty by Great Britain as arguments for his renomination by the Democratic party.

²Quoted from R. W. Van Alstyne, ed., "Anglo-American Relations, 1853-1857," *American Historical Review*, XLII (1936-37), 498.

in 1856. He even found it expedient to recognize the Walker regime in Nicaragua.

After the smoke of party battle had blown away in the United States and Pierce found that he was not his party's choice for re-nomination, it was easy for him to revive the issue of the Treaty with Great Britain. This in fact was what the British government had been hoping for. A convention implementing the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty proved a very simple matter, once both sides were reconciled to yielding ground. An agreement was reached in October 1856. As partners, the two governments were to arrange a settlement of the Mosquito question with Nicaragua on the basis of Nicaraguan sovereignty over the territory, subject to guaranties for Indian autonomy, Greytown was to be made a free city, separate from the Mosquitos, but was to pay the tribe an annuity; and Britain was to make separate agreements with Guatemala and Honduras on the Belize and Bay Islands questions, respectively.

The issues seemed on the threshold of settlement. The American Senate accepted the convention with one small change, requiring the Bay Islands to be put under the sovereignty of Honduras. This it had originally been agreed to do, but with the important qualification that they be made a "free territory." Presumably this condition would give Britain a treaty right to intervene in the islands. The convention went on the rocks over this point alone, for the British government rejected the alteration, preferring to risk the whole baffling question once more rather than abandon the islands to the danger of invasion by American filibusters. Britain had no confidence in the capacity of the Central American republics to survive the onslaught of William Walker and his band, nor in the intention of the Buchanan administration to conform to the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty once Britain had surrendered her advantages. Palmerston exclaimed:

It is perhaps doubtful whether Honduras and the other States of Central America really wish us to give up the Bay Islands. If they were wise they would wish us to keep them. In our Hands those Islands can never become a Place d'Armes for Buccaneers. In the Hands of Honduras they may at any time become so, because the Republic of Honduras has no navy to cope with the ships from New Orleans, and can never station in those Islands a Force able to resist a Walker Invasion. It is therefore morally certain that not long after those Islands are made over to Honduras whatever may be the Conditions of the Cession they will be occupied by United States Pirates, and become a starting Point for an Invasion of Central America, and it is probable that it is this view

of the matter which makes Buchanan so desirous of getting us out of those Islands *

The Clayton-Bulwer Treaty was like a pig in a poke, neither side would trust the other. As long as the British refused to surrender their advantages, the Treaty fell short of fulfillment. As long as filibustering continued the scourge of Central America, there was little hope for the future. True to form, Walker, though overthrown in Nicaragua in May 1857, returned to the fray the same year. Domestic politics in the United States sheltered the "grey-eyed man of destiny," as he had come to be known. No one ever prevented him from making a getaway from American shores. This time he was stopped from invading Nicaragua by an intrepid American naval officer, who, with four hundred sailors, surrounded his band near Greytown. Sent back to his own country, however, Walker went scot-free. His popularity must have been overwhelming: the President publicly censured his captor, but quailed at the prospect of keeping the filibuster under arrest! At length, taken by a British naval ship on his last expedition off the coast of Honduras, Walker was delivered up to Central American justice and his restless spirit was stilled forever by a Honduran firing squad in 1860.

Beyond a doubt Walker was the Achilles' heel of the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty. The British had come to appreciate that the Treaty held real advantages for them; it estopped the United States from annexing or dominating Central America, and thus assured them security as fully as it did the United States. Palmerston had as keen a sense of the Treaty's value as anyone, since it interposed a permanent barrier against American advance and guaranteed a balance of interests in the Caribbean Sea. The Prime Minister linked it with the problem of Cuba. He knew that Buchanan, like Pierce, had his eyes on the Pearl of the Antilles. If Spain could be bolstered in Cuba and American influence kept at bay in Central America, the British West Indies would be safe. Moreover, if the United States could be reconciled to the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty, the Treaty would serve as a master instrument for the security of the British Empire. It would deprive the United States of any just cause for war in the future, and thus protect Great Britain in the West against the chronic complications in which she found herself involved with her continental neighbors.

These were the thoughts that ran through the minds of British statesmen when they considered the possibility of losing the Clay-

* Quoted from Van Alstyne, ed., "Anglo-American Relations, 1853-1857," *American Historical Review*, XLII, 499-500.

ton-Bulwer Treaty and returning to an open system of competition with the United States in Central America Palmerston remarked: If we were quite sure that the Treaty could be permanently kept in Existence, and that it would be honestly observed I should be inclined to say let us stick to it, even at the Sacrifice of those Points of Difference as to its Interpretation, on which the United States insist. But the Yankees are such Rogues and such ingenious Rogues that it is hardly possible to hope that even if the present Questions were settled to their liking . . . some new Cavils would not be found, or at least that by the indirect agency of such men as Walker & his followers some independent North American State would not be established in Central America, in alliance with the United States if not in Union with them, *in short Texas over again* . . .⁴

There was no mistaking the unpopularity of the Treaty in the United States. The public "all hate the treaty with one mind," reported the new British minister to Washington, Lord Napier "Democrats and Republicans agree here when they agree on nothing else . . ."⁵ Manifest Destiny men had long been bitter against it, though their leader, Senator Douglas, had voted for the treaty in 1850. But many more had joined their ranks since then, Buchanan and Marcy had hoped to elbow Great Britain out of her position in 1854, their references to the Monroe Doctrine show that they hoped to leave of the Treaty little but the shell. Doubtless the interminable bickering over the application of the Treaty soured Americans on it, though, as we have seen, the United States was far from blameless for the continued delays.

As President, Buchanan showed signs of proposing to abrogate the Treaty, despite the fact that it had been ratified in 1850 as a basic and permanent arrangement. To abrogate it without British consent would spell bad faith in the observance of treaties; to do so *with* British consent would mean that Britain would choose her own position in Central America, as she had done before 1850. To avoid either or both of these undesirable outcomes Buchanan stayed his hand while the British government proceeded to make its own settle-

⁴ Quoted from Van Alstyne, *op cit.*, p. 500. The example set by the United States in annexing Texas in 1845 made a lasting impression on the minds of British statesmen. Hence the italicizing of the last phrase in the quotation cited "There can be little Doubt," Lord Palmerston had previously written, "that in the Course of Time the AngloSaxon Race will spread far South in America, but it is for our Interest that this Should not happen until the Swarms are prepared to separate from the Parent Hive" (*Ibid.*, p. 499).

⁵ Quoted from R. W. Van Alstyne, "British Diplomacy and the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty, 1850-1860," *Journal of Modern History*, XI (1939), 179.

ment with the Central American republics. After it had assured itself that Buchanan would keep faith, it completed the necessary arrangements with the latter along the lines intended by the convention of 1856.

The Clayton-Bulwer Treaty was thus at last implemented in 1859 and 1860 by three simple agreements made by the British government with Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua, respectively. After all of the sparring over Belize, the treaty with Guatemala recognized the most-extended boundaries of this settlement, not those defined by the Spanish treaty of 1786, the following year the settlement was regularized by being converted formally into a colony. No harm to the position of the United States was done by this step. Buchanan publicly expressed himself satisfied in his annual message of 1860, and the public was doubtless too wrought up over the results of the exciting presidential election to notice the logical inconsistency with the Monroe Doctrine which the bickerings over the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty had induced. The other two agreements, with Honduras and Nicaragua, disposed of the Mosquito and Bay Islands questions according to American wishes.

The Clayton-Bulwer Treaty was an important instrument of American security. It had been negotiated in the first instance with this object solely in mind. It was the isthmian analogue of the Jay treaty of 1794, and it had achieved its end—insurance of the safety of a transit route. This had been the principal concern in 1850. But public interest in an isthmian waterway evaporated shortly after 1850, the country then discovered the difference in interpretation respecting the existing British interests in Central America, and it was entitled to query the substantial value of the Treaty. It was natural for Sir Henry Bulwer to guard British prestige and interests in Central America; but the Treaty was intended to neutralize the region, neither power exercising any political influence whatsoever, it gave the United States a right to question any act of Britain contrary to it, and Britain an equal right respecting the United States. The fault of the British government lay in its reluctance to admit the legitimacy of the American queries. Until the Treaty had been fully implemented, it could not be said to have accomplished mutual security. To reach this end, a spirit of mutual confidence and co-operation was essential; but it was absolutely lacking.

In the United States the Manifest Destiny men railed against the Treaty because they said it was contrary to the Monroe Doctrine. What they meant was that the Treaty barred the United States as

well as Britain from dominating Central America. The Treaty fettered American ambitions, awareness of which was no doubt a factor in multiplying the general prejudice. There was, however, little practical opportunity for the aspirants of manifest destiny to burst the bonds at this period, filibustering to the contrary notwithstanding. No demand for an American-owned and -controlled canal, for example, was heard during this decade. In the meantime the sectional rift within the United States became a gulf. President Buchanan in truth had no other choice in 1860 than to express himself satisfied with the Treaty.

CHAPTER 11

THE HAY-PAUNCEFOTE TREATY OF 1901: AMERICAN SUPREMACY

THE CLAYTON-BULWER TREATY of 1850, as we have seen, aimed at neutralizing Central America and whatever transit route across the Isthmus should be employed: Neither Britain nor the United States was to control the canal; the passage was to be open to all nations at all times on equal terms; and, with the exception of existing British territorial interests, which were defined by supplementary agreements, neither power was to exercise any political influence in Central America. Once this Treaty was fully implemented, it furnished perhaps as good an illustration of this type of security as has ever been achieved: no incident in the forty-odd years of its history after 1860 occurred to blight confidence in the United States that Great Britain would observe the agreement. This does not mean, however, that the United States was long contented with the Treaty. The Manifest Destiny men of the '50's first threw a wet blanket over it when they denounced the Treaty as a compromise of the Monroe Doctrine. They were thinking in terms of American supremacy in Central America, the very suggestion of an international partnership was repugnant to them. But their aspirations were merely premature. The Civil War was not long over before symptoms of the impulse to dominate made their reappearance in the United States.

The immediate issue was the ownership and control of a waterway. When Ferdinand de Lesseps, the celebrated French builder

of the Suez Canal, formed a private stock company in Paris in 1879 in the hope of repeating his performance in Panama, President Hayes brought the question squarely into the open. The De Lesseps project was precisely the type of promotion anticipated by the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty, that is, a private enterprise to be encouraged by the governments, yet Hayes, declaring that an isthmian canal would be "virtually a part of the coast line of the United States," insisted that it should be American-owned and -controlled. Not even the most careful attempts by the French promoter to court American good will nor the most positive assurance that the French government had no connection with his enterprise altered the attitude assumed by Hayes. De Lesseps duly pressed forward the work with capital supplied by French peasants, but he was cold-shouldered in the United States. Bankruptcy was his early fate.

President Hayes assumed an attitude. It remained for James G. Blaine, Secretary of State in 1881, to develop a program. Blaine pleaded with the British government for an alteration of the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty. Changed conditions, he said, had made that instrument obsolete. The Treaty had not really established equality: British naval power commanded the approaches to any canal across the Isthmus; "a mere agreement of neutrality on paper between the great powers of Europe might prove ineffectual to preserve the canal in time of hostilities," and the United States might be forced to wage a "defensive and protective war" in order to make good its right to use the canal.¹ Offering to pledge the United States anew to a policy of self-denial in the acquisition of territory, Blaine asked for a new treaty which would give the United States the right to fortify the canal and hold political control of it in partnership with the republic through whose territory the canal would pass.

But the British government was not to be so easily convinced. Britain had sacrificed enough in 1850; she could "conceive no more melancholy spectacle" than a competition in the building of fortifications to command the approaches to the canal, and she refused to believe that, once the United States obtained control single-handed over the canal, the republics of Central America could remain independent.

Blaine proposed; the British government disposed. Blaine's successor, Secretary Frelinghuysen, tried to drive a wedge by signing a treaty with Nicaragua, the United States to build a canal and protect the territory of that republic; but Grover Cleveland in 1885 withdrew this treaty from the Senate and virtually repudiated both

¹ Extracts quoted from J. B. Moore, *Digest of International Law*, III, 190

Hayes and Blaine. Expressing the view that a canal was outside of American territory and too remote from American interest to warrant a political engagement to defend the territory of Nicaragua, Mr. Cleveland returned to the system of the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty. But eleven years later, during his second administration, his Secretary of State, Richard Olney, reverted to the Blaine view, proposing "a direct and straightforward application to Great Britain for a reconsideration of the whole matter."

Olney got the impression that the British government had meanwhile altered its views, that it had come to regard Suez as ample compensation and was indifferent to a sacrifice of its political position with respect to a Central American canal. The issue was not really joined, however, until December 1898, by this time the Spanish-American War was over, and the experiences of that war had demonstrated the truth of what Hayes had said nearly a score of years before—an isthmian canal would be an invaluable asset to the intercoastal defense of the United States.

John Hay, McKinley's Secretary of State, finished what Olney had proposed. Avoiding the treacherous ground of argument over the question whether or not the neutralization of Central America was obsolete, Hay spoke softly and tactfully. Hay understood well the British character, which was moved by a conciliatory request far more than by bluster. At the same time there were silent factors that behooved Great Britain to meet him halfway. A half-century previously Lord Palmerston had grasped the value of conciliating the United States, American friendship was of untold value, he had seen, to the security of the British Empire. In 1899, with France and Germany snarling at the Empire in its conflict with the Boers of South Africa, the sentiments of Palmerston had immediate application. Furthermore, Britain had already more than half-revealed her hand, she had furnished the United States her moral support in the Spanish-American War, the victories of which so pointedly altered the balance of power in the Caribbean and the Pacific. There was but one fly in the ointment: the Canadians wanted a share in the isthmian canal and, more particularly, they wanted an alteration in the boundary of the Alaskan panhandle giving them access to deep water. If Britain would hold out on the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty, they reasoned, the United States would make the desired concessions in Alaska.

Nothing of the sort happened. American public sentiment was now too warm to brook delay, and Hay had Lord Salisbury, the Prime Minister, privately warned of the danger of allowing it to

get out of hand. Either the Treaty would have to be revised or Congress would peremptorily abrogate it. The warning brought the desired response; and on February 5, 1900, Hay and Lord Pauncefote, the British Ambassador in Washington, signed a treaty.

The first Hay-Pauncefote Treaty (first because it was superseded the following year) gave the United States the right to *build* a canal, but it did not otherwise change the neutral status of either the canal or the region of Central America, the canal was to remain open to all comers in war as in peace, and no fortifications were to be erected near it, and the self-denial stipulation of the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty with respect to territory or the exercise of political influence in Central America remained unaffected.

At first the public was inclined to be satisfied, voices soon began to be raised, however, against an instrument which merely conferred a gratuitous right to build a waterway; it looked as though the United States was as far from controlling the canal as ever. The Senate responded by writing in amendments declaring the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty superseded and leaving a loophole through which the United States might take its own measures to harmonize the use of the canal with American national defense. At first the British government balked; these steps, it held, were merely preparatory to the United States taking over the Central American republics.

Having gone thus far, however, Britain met the demands by agreeing on November 18, 1901, to a new treaty. The second Hay-Pauncefote Treaty declared the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty superseded, reiterated the provisions for the free and peaceful use of the canal on equal terms by all parties, and omitted the prohibition against fortifications. In effect Britain salvaged the essential thing, a pledge of equal treatment for her ships. Privately the British foreign office understood that the United States would fortify the canal, two years later the admiralty dismantled its naval stations in the West Indies, leaving a vacuum which only the United States could fill. And the canal, its approaches, and the adjacent territory in Central and South America were thus firmly secured under American hegemony.

CHAPTER 12

THE VIRGIN ISLANDS, 1867-1917

FORTY MILES east and south of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands—Danish for two and a half centuries—form part of the island screen of the Caribbean Sea. They began to have strategic value in the eyes of the United States late in the Civil War. William H. Seward then saw how serviceable they would be in the suppression of Confederate commerce destroyers operating in the Caribbean. But to his mind they had a permanent value also. The Secretary of State held that American naval power must be placed upon a firm foundation in those waters. Otherwise the sweeping concept of security implicitly held by his countrymen would lack reality. That concept, as we have seen, took in the immediate approaches to the continental United States, the control of an isthmian canal, and the protection of all South American countries against European aggression. Seward's diplomatic exchanges with Napoleon III over Mexico undoubtedly impressed him with the vital role the Caribbean must play. The United States must have naval fulcra; Seward threw out several lines, hoping to get more than one Caribbean base. He opened the subject of a deal with Spain, Sweden, and the Dominican Republic; but he pinned his greatest hopes upon making a transaction with Denmark.

Three factors weighed with the Danes when the Secretary of State in 1865 confronted them with an offer. They hesitated to transfer their holdings in the Caribbean to the United States without the consent of Britain and France. Having been the victim of a German attack the preceding year, they needed Anglo-French support in Europe. It even crossed Seward's mind that they might bargain away their colonies in return for more aggressive backing against Germany. This question proved only a temporary deterrent, however. The British government, knowing of the American offer, made no move to discourage the Danes from accepting. This was a sign that Britain had ceased to intrigue against American attempts to take up positions in the Caribbean.

In the second place, the Danes regarded a popular plebiscite in the islands on the question of a transfer as important because of its bearing on the status of their lost provinces in Europe. They hoped the Germans would permit a like expression of opinion in at least

North Schleswig Seward opposed the plebiscite because he feared the subject would get cold in the Senate; but he finally yielded in order to get a treaty. The plebiscite was duly held in the islands, and the results were favorable to the transfer.

The third factor was the question of price. Seward offered five million dollars, and eventually conceded seven and one-half million. The treaty was thus concluded in October 1867. But the Senate lost the opportunity by tabling it. By then there was scant interest in the security of the Caribbean. Since both the French and the Spanish adventures in Mexico and Santo Domingo had been liquidated, sentiment in the United States for acquiring West Indian islands no longer had a teaser. Seward's hope for a base at Samana Bay, Santo Domingo, was likewise dashed. The United States settled down to a long period of inertia in the Caribbean, eventually broken by the Cuban insurrection and the renewal of interest in an isthmian canal. It was Captain Mahan in his essays on *The Interest of America in Sea Power* who brought American attention back to the strategic value of the Danish islands, easily demonstrating that they belonged to the outer breastworks of the Isthmus.

Once again, in 1902, the United States lost an opportunity. One Captain Christmas, a discharged officer from the Danish Navy, thought to improve his fortune by promoting a twofold deal with German shipping interests on the one hand and the American government on the other. The Hamburg-American Line already owned dock facilities in St. Thomas, one of the three larger islands of the Danish group. Christmas got it interested in a harbor- and land-development scheme on the neighboring island of St. John, with the idea that German immigrants might be settled on the island and the steamship company be used as a blind for the German government in its scheme to secure political control. The scheme had its temptations. It definitely attracted Admiral von Tirpitz of the German Admiralty; but that was as far as it got. Warnings from the German Ambassador in Washington of the repercussions certain to be felt were apparently enough to scotch it.

As for the Danish government, it appears to have regarded the United States as the only practicable buyer. There was a question of propriety, since this country had formerly initiated the transaction and then refused to seal it. Hoping to earn a realtor's commission, Christmas worked on John Hay, the Secretary of State, in Washington in 1899, and Hay got Henry White, the first secretary of the American Embassy in London, to pay a visit to Copenhagen. The Danish government was thus appeased by a gesture which

seemed to make the United States the initiator of a new negotiation. Despite Seward's former offer of seven and one-half millions, however, Hay haggled for terms, he would not go beyond five millions, and he was illiberal in the matter of political rights for the island inhabitants. At length the Danish government subscribed to a treaty, but the agreement was beaten by a tie vote in the Danish Parliament. Two aged, bedridden members from the Schleswig border, their prejudices perhaps aroused by memories of their bitter experiences, were brought to Copenhagen expressly to help defeat the treaty.

There was little disagreement in Denmark on the advisability of unloading the islands on the United States sometime, provided proper terms could be secured. The building of the Panama Canal was certain to increase their political value, and Denmark naturally wished to make the most of her advantage. The sinister presence of Germany suggested that perhaps a better bargain might be driven in the future. However, the United States showed no further interest until 1915, when it decided the fate of the Virgin Islands without further temporizing. On suspicion that Germany might extend the area of war either by occupying Denmark or by forcing her to cede her colonies for conversion into a Caribbean submarine base, Secretary Lansing with President Wilson's approval warned the Danish government to cede them to this country at once or risk their occupation by the United States.

Whether or not the Danes feared a sudden move from the German side we do not know, at any rate they bowed to the United States. They could scarcely complain of the terms: the United States promised twenty-five million dollars, five times the amount offered by John Hay, and, moreover, secretly gave its sanction to an extension of the Danish occupation of Greenland. The treaty, with the latter stipulation omitted, was signed in August 1916 and the Senate under presidential prompting consented to it the following month. Denmark ratified after a popular plebiscite had been taken, and the transfer of the islands took place early in 1917, just before the United States entered the war.

Acquisition of the islands was thus a preventive measure, aimed at heading off any possible German aggression. The United States itself did not develop its new properties, in spite of the reputed excellence of the harbor facilities. Mere possession was considered sufficient security.

CHAPTER 13

THE CUBAN PROTECTORATE, 1898-1934

WHEN CONGRESS authorized war against Spain on April 20, 1898, it declared itself in favor of simple independence for the people of Cuba. During the ensuing four years the island was conquered and ruled by an American army of occupation, but the Cubans were permitted to hold a convention and put into effect a constitution on condition that they accept certain qualifications of their independence designated by the United States. These qualifications comprised the Platt Amendment, which in its original form was an amendment to the Army appropriation bill of March 2, 1901, and was a statement of the terms on which the military evacuation of Cuba would take place. These terms were finally accepted by the Cubans as a part of their constitution and also as a part of the treaty of permanent relations concluded in May 1903, by which the independence of the island was formally acknowledged.

There were eight conditions in the Platt Amendment. Two of these restricted Cuba in the conduct of its foreign relations in such a way as to prevent it from becoming entangled politically or financially with a foreign power. Mr. Elihu Root, the Secretary of War, who drafted the amendment, felt that the island must at all costs avoid becoming, like China, a pawn in the hands of foreign powers, and that the United States would be in a better position to prevent it if it had an express right of intervention to safeguard the independence of Cuba. Consequently the third condition was more sweeping in that it gave "the right to intervene for the preservation of Cuban independence, [and] the maintenance of a government adequate for the protection of life, property, and individual liberty."¹ Then there were five other stipulations, chief among which was the grant of a right to the United States to purchase or lease two sites for naval stations. On this grant a naval base was subsequently established at Guantánamo on the southeastern side of the island.

According to Mr. Root the principal import of the Platt Amendment was its guaranty against European interference. He intended it simply as an iteration, in written form, of the Monroe Doctrine. Some thirty years later he asserted that for the most part he had

¹ W. M. Malloy, *Treaties and Conventions between the United States and Other Powers, 1776-1909* (2 vols., Washington, D.C., 1910), I, 364. Italics inserted.

been moved by distrust of Germany. In practice, however, the only part of the Amendment ever to be invoked was the third condition Domestic affairs in the island, not even remotely connected with outside powers, have proved the sole basis of American intervention.

The several interventions that have occurred during the life of the Platt Amendment may be classified as follows: (1) those designed to correct the political habits of the Cubans, particularly with reference to presidential elections; (2) those aimed at graft and corruption in connection with the granting of concessions to private concerns by the Cuban government; (3) those intended chiefly to serve a direct national interest of the United States.

The first of these types was the most frequent and significant. When Estrada Palma yielded in 1905 to the temptation to run for a second term, the Moderate Party that was backing him faked 150,000 votes and threatened to use force against its opponents, the Liberals. So the latter stayed away from the polls and on their part, apparently with most of the people behind them, threatened insurrection. Palma then secretly appealed for American intervention, and finally, after he had wired Roosevelt that he would resign unless he obtained help, the President dispatched two of his cabinet officers, William Howard Taft and Robert P. Bacon, to investigate. When the American commissioners suggested new elections on the basis of a fair vote, and when it finally dawned on Palma that he would get no armed help, he and his followers resigned anyway, leaving the island without a government. Their act compelled the establishment of a provisional government and the stationing of an armed force of over five thousand men to maintain order in Cuba for the ensuing three years. The intervention was terminated in 1909 when the Liberals won the election under an electoral law drafted by Colonel Enoch H. Crowder and carried out under American supervision.

This instance illustrates the general course which interventions of this type ran. Cuban political habits did not permit fair, orderly voting. Faking of voters' lists by the party in power, intimidation, and boycott of the elections by the opposing party which then threatened insurrection were the usual occurrences in the island during presidential-election years. Substantially the same things happened in 1916, 1920, and 1933, with the incumbent president appealing to the American government for support in the name of stable government.

In the intervention of 1906-1909 the significant features are the initial reluctance of the American government and the evasive way

in which it justified itself. Theodore Roosevelt did not want to take over the island, and he felt obliged to justify the act in his annual message of 1906 by making a reference to the danger of European interference in case he failed to do so. But there is nothing to support the theory of such interference, and Roosevelt himself appeared not to take it seriously. He was obliged to act as a result of the complete breakdown of self-government in the island, but he dared not admit this to be the reason. At the time Elihu Root was in South America promoting closer relationships with the suspicious republics of that continent. Obviously intervention in Cuba at that time was embarrassing to the United States. But distrust of intervention by Americans themselves and the difficulty of educating them to the need for it, particularly during an election year in this country, made frank supervision of Cuban affairs impossible.

The second type of intervention was confined to diplomatic representation and was aimed to defeat graft in the giving of concessions by the Cuban government. It was a type developed by Secretary Knox during the administration of William Howard Taft in 1911-1912. The Zapata swamp concession of the latter year will serve as illustration. The concession was a reclamation project in Oriente Province. The American minister insisted that it was really a cloak for the granting of valuable timber resources, and asked and obtained permission from Knox to oppose it. Later investigation showed his fears to be exaggerated, though the element of graft in this and other concessions of the Cuban government was seldom absent. This type of supervision was not followed by later American administrations. Its utter futility was obvious.

The armed intervention of 1917 was one of the most striking measures ever taken by the American government in fulfillment of its Cuban policy. There was the familiar background of turmoil and graft in the island. Between them the political parties managed to get 800,000 votes cast in the preliminary election of 1916—nearly double the actual number of voters according to the census taken three years later. The Liberals boycotted the final elections, as previously, and organized for revolution in January and February, 1917. But this time the American government nipped the conspiracy in the bud by announcing it would support only the "constitutional" government—that is, the president fraudulently re-elected, General Menocal. While a force of only 2,600 Marines was actually sent, it was enough to overawe the revolutionists; and it remained in the island until 1922.

This intervention is interesting in view of the contrary attitude

assumed by the Wilson administration four years previously toward a somewhat similar situation in Mexico. There the incumbent president also had obtained office illegally and President Wilson had accordingly refused to countenance him. But one factor was present in the Cuban imbroglio in 1917 which distinguished it from that of Mexico in 1913—revolution in 1917 threatened destruction or injury to the sugar properties, and in wartime, when a continued flow of Cuban sugar was a prime necessity, a possible interruption of it had to be frustrated. In order to prevent Germany from sowing discord in the island, the Wilson administration took the additional step of persuading Cuba to enter the war in April 1917 with the United States.

The island was thus beyond question an American protectorate for the period covering the second Wilson administration, and it held this status at least sporadically during the whole remaining period of the Platt Amendment. Though by far the most aggressive, the intervention of 1917 aroused little if any criticism in the United States, so directly was it linked to the national interest. But domestic American politics returned, after the emergency was over, to block consistent supervision when Harding promised in the course of the campaign of 1920 that he would not "cover with a veil of secrecy repeated acts of unwarrantable interference in domestic affairs of the little republics." Frustration again ensued. Although General Crowder, whom Wilson had originally sent to work out electoral reform in the island, remained as unofficial supervisor of Cuban elections, Menocal and his nominee, Zayas, continued along the customary path of fraud and intimidation. Crowder got no support from Washington, which apparently quaked at the possibility of hostile reaction that a strong line of policy would bring at home and in Latin America.

The evidence thus presented points to the conclusion that the extent of American supervision of Cuba varied with the ebb and flow of public sentiment at home and with the degree of emphasis that the United States laid on its relations with the Latin-American countries. Except for the emergency of 1917-1922, the political exigencies of the United States at home and abroad thwarted a thoroughgoing tutelage in Cuba, and benevolent efforts to induce the Cubans to be good conspicuously lacked success.

When in 1933 there was a recurrence of the old unrest in the island, precipitated by the efforts of President Machado to keep himself in power, the American government tried a new tack. It sent Mr. Sumner Welles, an ambassador experienced in the foibles of

Caribbean republics, to mediate between Machado and the opposition Machado shortly fled the country and his opponent, de Céspedes, was duly recognized by the United States, the latter being himself soon overthrown by a student-soldier combination which resented American mediation and elevated a university professor of anatomy to the presidential chair. This by no means terminated the gyrations of Cuban politics; and the obvious futility of every technique employed since 1902 to bring about political stability in the island must have been a major factor in the American decision to liquidate the Platt Amendment. This step was achieved by a new general treaty of relations signed in May 1934, which formally abrogated the right of intervention of the United States under the famous amendment but retained the right of lease of the Guantánamo base. A convention signed the preceding year at Montevideo by all the American republics, including the United States, had expressly renounced the right of any state "to intervene in the internal or external affairs of another."² Henceforth the frame of reference of the Cuban policy of the United States became the general program of inter-American solidarity. The success of the one must be tested by the standards of success applied to the other.³

CHAPTER 14

THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, 1905-1934

LIKE EGYPT, a quarter of a century earlier, the Dominican Republic in 1905 was a debt-ridden, bankrupt country. For upwards of thirty years its dictator presidents had in turn leaned upon foreign banks and speculative interests as a means of supporting themselves in power. They bought their security by pledging the revenues of

² *Report of the Delegation of the United States of America to the Inter-American Conference for the Maintenance of Peace, Buenos Aires* (Washington, D.C., 1937), p. 19. Italics inserted.

³ The American government in 1933-34 finally lent its support to Colonel Fulgencio Batista, an ex-sergeant who engineered a successful mutiny of the noncommissioned officers of the Cuban army. Batista kept his footing for ten years, when he bowed himself out in favor of his rival, Grau San Martín, the one-time anatomy professor whom the United States had opposed in 1933. In 1944 Grau got American support but discovered that his predecessor had stripped the treasury before leaving office. See Sumner Welles, *The Time for Decision* (New York, 1935), pp. 197-99, and Arthur P. Whitaker, ed., *Inter-American Affairs 1944* (New York, 1945), pp. 41-44.

the country and then squandered the principal, leaving it and the unpaid interest on past loans to accumulate as the national debt. The worst offender was Ulysses Heureaux, who had managed to stay in power from 1882 to 1899. Heureaux scoured the financial centers of Europe and America for speculators willing to risk their money at ruinous interest rates. He secured money temporarily from local merchants on promise of ten per cent per month, and finally induced Westendorp & Company of Amsterdam to float a large loan of £770,000 in return for a first lien on the customs. Westendorp assumed collection of the customs in 1888, doling out a monthly allowance to the government after recouping himself; but in the meantime Heureaux exhausted the proceeds of the loan within two years. In 1892 the San Domingo Improvement Company, a New Jersey corporation, succeeded to the rights and obligations of Westendorp, including the control of the customs. Heureaux continued to hang on until the end of the decade, subsisting on monthly advances from the company, on forced loans and paper money, and on a secret payment by Haiti for a cession of territory. His successors, Jiménez and Vasquez, tried to control the situation, but by 1903 revolution had driven each into exile.

Extreme political instability in 1903 precipitated the threat of foreign intervention. France, Germany, Italy, and Spain each secured separate pledges, while Belgium, in order to save the claims of its citizens, demanded an international commission of Americans, Belgians, and French. Armed vessels from the United States and the several European countries landed troops temporarily in 1903. It was by no means clear what the fate of Santo Domingo would be: none of the European powers had formulated a definite plan to take over the government, nor had the Belgian proposal met with response. On the other hand, the new Dominican president, Morales, facing realities, proposed intervention by the United States.

When the Theodore Roosevelt administration finally acted, after more than a year of indecision, it justified itself on the ground of self-protection. It was Elihu Root, the author of the Platt Amendment, who defined the point of view most clearly. Like Olney, he insisted the United States was "sovereign upon this continent." When a wrong by a Latin-American state went unredressed, "we ourselves will see that it is redressed . . . What we will not permit the great Powers of Europe to do, we will not permit any American republic to make it necessary for the great Powers of Europe to do." This was in a nutshell the so-called Roosevelt corollary to the Monroe Doctrine, a justification for action against an American state

Actually the intervention was limited to a treaty, signed February 5, 1905, which authorized the collection of Dominican customs by representatives of the American government and also supervision of payments on the debt. Failure of the Senate to act on this convention reflected the general indifference and hostility in this country to intervention, but Roosevelt saved Santo Domingo from a probable lapse into anarchy by substituting a *modus vivendi*,² through which the identical results were achieved. Commencing in April 1905 American customs collectors paid over 45 per cent of the weekly revenues to the Dominican government and distributed the remainder among the various creditors. Roosevelt eventually overcame the scruples of the anti-interventionists in the Senate by negotiating a new treaty two years later whereby Santo Domingo would in the future adjust its debt with its creditors itself. But the United States was to name a Receiver-General of Dominican Customs, and until it had redeemed the entire standing debt, the republic was not to increase its indebtedness or to modify existing duties without previous American consent.

Dominican politics remained reasonably stable under this arrangements for five years. Then a fresh epidemic of revolutions, followed by tightening financial straits of the local government, proved the inadequacy of the limited form of intervention introduced by Roosevelt. The Wilson Administration tackled the issue on the principle that it could deal only with *constitutional*, that is, lawfully elected governments. After taking certain preliminary steps, such as dispatching observers from the United States to scrutinize the polls on election day, the American government discovered that nothing short of full military intervention would meet the problem. In 1914 it had secured from the newly elected president, Jiménez, a promise that he would employ an American financial adviser and abide by the latter's wishes. But the Dominican Congress balked at the arrangement, and for over a year the hapless president was caught between the two stones of Dominican pride and American determination to enforce orderly government. Finally, in May 1916, when Jiménez was impeached by his own Congress, Secretary Lansing demanded that he ask for armed intervention. This he refused to do; disorder then broke out, and the American government followed the example set by itself in Haiti the preceding year by occupying the republic without invitation.

² A *modus vivendi* is a temporary arrangement between two governments which does not have the full force of a treaty and therefore does not require the approval of the Senate. For the time in which it functions, however, it may operate as completely as a treaty.

The entire personnel in the Dominican government was replaced by American officers, and on November 29, 1916, the commander, Captain Knapp, proclaimed military government. Jiménez and his cabinet exiled themselves to Cuba, and the Americans undertook a thorough house-cleaning in Santo Domingo. Theoretically the military government was an independent Dominican administration, the State Department at Washington actually maintained diplomatic relations with it. As such it was less hampered by interference and red tape from Washington than was its sister regime in Haiti.² Nevertheless it did not escape the weaknesses of government by force, and shared with the Haitian occupation the censures passed upon it in the United States and Latin America after the war of 1914-1918 was over. Brazil and Uruguay even made formal representations against it in 1920.

The policy of the United States after 1920 was to ease the native Dominicans back into office upon their giving guaranties of constitutional behavior, and to evacuate the military regime to the extent that native replacements in the offices were successfully made. This showed no immediate signs of success, for extreme nationalist agitation in the republic became so violent that the Dominican politicians dared not co-operate with the plan. The project was finally executed, however, with considerable finesse under the leadership of Secretary of State Hughes and Mr. Sumner Welles, who was made minister to Santo Domingo in 1922. An agreement was reached with the Dominican minister in Washington whereby a native provisional government would gradually absorb the functions of the military government and supervise the elections itself. The leading native politicians then gathered together as a committee of representatives in consultation with Mr. Welles, who appears to have played a persuasive role in inspiring the native population with confidence, and they elected a provisional president.

The military evacuation was completed in 1924, but the terms of the original convention of 1907, which provided for a Receiver-General of Customs, though revised in a new and slightly more liberal agreement, remained in effect. Nor was the cancer of revolution and dictatorship excised. The elected president, Vasquez, managed to postpone the end of his own term two years beyond the legal limit before he was overthrown; and his successor, General Trujillo, restored the characteristic type of one-man government. In 1946 Trujillo was still firmly in power, having sustained a reputation for political persecution, even assassination, of his opponents. Further-

² See the following chapter

more, he enjoyed the favor of the government at Washington, long since reconciled to being realistic toward the internal politics of Caribbean republics. A new convention, concluded in September 1940, restored to the Dominicans the control over the customs, subject only to a guaranty that they would continue to make monthly payments from the proceeds thereof in redemption of the bonds still outstanding.^a

CHAPTER 15

HAITI, 1915-1934

HAITI shares with the Dominican Republic the mountainous island of Santo Domingo. Its background and the language of its *élite* class are French in contrast to the Spanish traditions of its neighbor. The estimated population in 1915 was two million, or two hundred to the square mile. This is said to have increased to three million by 1940. But the rugged character of the country prevents an even distribution; some parts of the land are densely crowded, others are virtually unoccupied.

The great bulk of the population was (and still is) an undersized, underfed, and diseased Negro peasantry cultivating the soil in lots of about one acre to the family. In Port-au-Prince lived the *élite*, an educated, even cultured, but irresponsible mulatto race of officeholders and office seekers. Holding to a strict color line, despising manual labor, and having no interest or ability in business, the *élite* were the ruling class and depended on the public spoils for their livelihood. The main function of a Haitian president was to fill the offices with his friends and relatives and the relatives of his wife, and the chief aim of all the *élite* not so favored was to take the first opportunity to oust him. Fortunately for those disappointed, there was always recourse to the *cacos*, a class of Negro mountain men available for hire. Often the same band hired by one candidate to put him in office would, after having fulfilled their duty, be retained by his opponent to put him out. In the four years before 1915 the *cacos* made and unmade six presidents in this way.

^a For later phases of the situation, see Charles A. Thomson, *Dictatorship in the Dominican Republic* (Foreign Policy Association Reports, XII, No. 3, April 15, 1936), and Graham H. Stuart, *Latin America and the United States* (4th edition, New York, 1944).

French and German mercantile and financial interests dominated the business of the country. The chief crop, coffee, was marketed mostly in France; imports, comprising soap, foodstuffs, and textiles, came from the United States. The Banque Nationale, a French corporation in which Germans owned a minority interest, was the fiscal agent of the government, marketing its bonds (which were legion in number by 1915) in Paris and elsewhere and holding on deposit its funds, which were derived chiefly from the customs. Successive presidents, interested only in revolution and graft, had boosted the foreign debt since 1875, and at the beginning of 1914 the government was definitely in default.

Unheeded advice offered by the American government in 1914 and hints that it should be given full control over the customs were forerunners of the complete intervention of the following year. In June 1914, at the suggestion of the American minister, the Banque Nationale stopped payment on the government's drafts, thereby precipitating revolution. Acting thus on the principle that before things can improve they must be made worse, the Banque Nationale hoped to force intervention. But the latter was not to come until July of the succeeding year, when a massacre and an assassination of the ruling president threw Port-au-Prince into anarchy. At that point an American squadron landed Marines on the island, and its commanding officer, Admiral Caperton, assumed control. Marines were stationed not only in the capital city but also at Cap Haitien, the second largest town in the republic, and along the coast in such a way as to make intervention complete. These steps were followed by a treaty converting Haiti into a full-fledged protectorate. Intended at first to last ten years, with provision for extension if necessary, the time limited was revised in 1917 to a flat twenty years. Under the terms of the agreement the United States was to nominate a Receiver-General to collect the customs and a Financial Adviser to aid in financial reconstruction, and a native constabulary officered by Americans was to be created for the purpose of performing ordinary police duty. In addition, Haiti was not to increase its debt or reduce its customs without American consent and was prohibited from selling or leasing any part of its territory to a third power.

A few days after Admiral Caperton's landing, Secretary Lansing discussed the Haitian problem in a private letter to Wilson. The method, he confessed, was high-handed, but necessary if the prevailing anarchy and disorder in the republic were to be cured. All the evidence points to the conclusion that the American government was single-minded in this purpose and was not motivated by ulterior

reasons The Haitian intervention, like the Dominican and to a lesser extent the Cuban, was a deliberate adventure in benevolent imperialism The Navy Department definitely stated its lack of interest in Môle St. Nicholas as a possible base. But the location of the island, nevertheless, with reference to the Caribbean and the continental United States made justification of the intervention fairly easy from the standpoint of national security. Seven years after the event, when the whole matter was under review before a Senate committee, Mr. Lansing implied that there had been danger of European action. France and Germany, it is true, had both been interested in Haitian affairs during the preceding two years, and each had separately taken the attitude at Washington that it should be made a partner in any reorganization scheme. The Wilson administration was itself considering some form of intervention in 1914, but indicated to each that it was opposed to a partnership If it had actually feared that either one would seize the initiative, it would not have delayed until the outbreak of the wild orgy of blood in July 1915 French and German pressure was exerted the year before, and not at all in connection with the latter affair The French Ambassador in fact heartily concurred in the intervention, and was told that French banking interests would be protected.

Justification for the intervention should be put on the basis on which it was made—restoration of order and a thoroughgoing reconstruction of Haitian finance and politics. But there seems to have been a general chorus of agreement, at least later, without inquiry into the facts, that intervention was necessary as a means of forestalling European action. This was distinctly not the ground on which the American administration acted in 1915 That it should have been later believed to have been an important factor is an illuminating commentary on the uncritical character of American opinion when issues touching on the Monroe Doctrine are suggested

The American occupation falls into two periods, one from 1915 to 1922 and the other from 1922 to 1934 Domestic politics in the United States forced an investigation in 1922, as a result of which the program of supervision and training of the Haitians in self-government was made more systematic. But from 1915 to 1930 the United States selected the only two Haitian presidents who were allowed to hold office, and it exercised control over every branch of the Haitian government. A constitution for the Republic, drafted in Washington in 1918 by no less a person than Franklin D. Roosevelt, was put into effect by a popular plebiscite which was supervised by the Marines and the American-commanded gendarmerie. There

were only 335 votes against it out of a total of over 69,000, and in one constituency the ballots were marked with only "Yes" blanks. From the standpoint of a benevolent domination the most serious fault of the American regime seems to have been its failure to build a colonial administration responsible to a single authority in Washington. Preoccupied with the war, the Wilson administration paid scant attention to Haiti. The State, War, and Navy departments each had a hand in the affair, and no single head controlled the various American officials in the Republic. After continued friction with the natives, the Financial Adviser stopped their salaries in July 1920, and they were obliged to accept an absolute right of veto by the American government.

After 1922 supervision of the Republic was centralized in the State Department at Washington and a High Commissioner was appointed to represent the president directly and to co-ordinate the services in Haiti. The High Commissioner, Brigadier General Russell, and the Haitian president, Louis Borno, henceforth jointly controlled the situation until 1930. Another investigating committee in that year criticized the American officials for trying to plant democracy in the Republic "by drill and harrow" and for behaving as though the occupation would be permanent. The Americans apparently made little effort to befriend the natives but treated even the *élite* with the aloofness they customarily reserved for Negroes at home.

In spite of its pessimism toward the possibilities of Haitian self-government in the future, the Forbes Committee of 1930 recommended withdrawal and rapid Haitianization of the Republic's administration. An uncontrolled election took place for the first time during the occupation in 1930, and the choice for president fell upon Sténio Vincent, who continued for the next eleven years to be head of the Republic. Evacuation came gradually over a period of four years, the last of the Marines brigade departing in 1934. The external indebtedness of the Republic had meanwhile been reduced under the administration of the Financial Adviser; under the new agreement with the American government this office was replaced by a fiscal representative, nominated by the United States but acting in behalf of the foreign bondholders. Under his guidance¹ the Haitians continued to make payments on their debt until February 1941. With

¹ In an election in April 1941 Vincent gave way to Elie Lescot. Five years later Lescot was expelled by a military junta, which continued to carry Vincent's name under the title of ex-officio Senator for life (*Political Handbook of the World 1946*).

the fall of France the year before, they found the market for their coffee, cotton, and sugar suddenly wiped out. In the meantime Vincent earned the reputation of being the most moderate and successful dictator in the Caribbean republic, and he was rewarded in 1941 by an accord with the United States which suspended payment on the debt and restored fiscal independence to the Haitian government.

CHAPTER 16

THE PANAMA REPUBLIC, 1903-1943

THE PANAMANIANs, in November 1903, aggrieved by the failure of Colombia to grant the United States a canal zone across the Isthmus, revolted and declared themselves an independent republic. The share of the United States in the success of this revolution is described elsewhere.¹ John Hay, the Secretary of State, and Monsieur Bunau-Varilla, the Frenchman whose intrigues were so vital to the success of the revolution, signed a treaty two weeks later by which the United States attained its objective—the control of a canal zone ten miles in width from sea to sea. In compensation Panama was to receive an indemnity of ten million dollars and, commencing nine years later, an annuity of two hundred and fifty thousand dollars. Under a separate understanding it was agreed that Panama would establish a permanent “constitutional fund,” to consist of three-fifths of the indemnity, and that she would invest this sum in first mortgages on real estate in New York City. J. P. Morgan and Company handled this business for the Republic.

The United States guaranteed the independence of Panama. There were, however, several important qualifications. Control of the Canal Zone gave the United States a monopoly position over the entire Isthmus; by merely exercising certain powers within the Zone the American government could harass, if not destroy, the economic independence of the Republic. Particularly was this true of Panama's two cities, Panama and Colón, which were located inside the Zone though legally they were declared separate from it. Ancón and Cristóbal, the terminal ports of the Canal, were urban areas continuous with Panama and Colón, respectively.

Paying slight thought to the probable consequences of its action,

¹ See Part II, chapter 40.

the Theodore Roosevelt administration in 1904 extended the American tariff laws and postal rates to the Zone. The effect was to isolate the Panamanian cities; their merchants could not compete in the Zone, though there was no other practicable outlet for their trade. On the other hand, the American postal rates threatened disaster to the post office of the Republic. A Panamanian citizen could step across the street to the post office in Ancón for a two-cent stamp which would perform the same service as a five-cent stamp bought in his own country.

These regulations provided the first test of the reality of Panama's freedom, and the results were only partially reassuring. Through William Howard Taft, who was sent to Panama as investigator in response to Panamanian protests, the tariff wall was abolished and the Isthmus made a free-trade area, though the American postal rates were retained. Panama wanted the legal rights of the United States in the Canal Zone defined more closely than had been done in the treaty. Imposing a tariff was a sovereign right; if the United States was sovereign in the Zone, it might take steps in the future that would again jeopardize the Republic. From her standpoint the United States was merely a lessee, with prerogatives limited to those essential for the maintenance and protection of the Canal. The argument impressed John Hay unfavorably, however, he was jealous lest the American government be put in the position of a private corporation, and he insisted that the United States had full proprietary rights over the Zone.

Much depended on the spirit in which the Hay-Bunau-Varilla Treaty was administered. Not long after, another question arose to block the prosperity of the Republic. The American commissaries and hotels within the Zone assumed the right to trade with all comers. The commissaries handled many lines of general merchandise not necessary for the functioning of the Canal, and made no effort to limit their patronage to the officials and employees of the Zone; the hotels in the Zone ruined the chances of the Panamanian hosteleries for outside business. According to the Panamanians, fully half the population of their cities in 1918 was buying its supplies from the American commissaries, to the detriment of local business.

This grievance, like the sore point over sovereignty, went unredressed for many years. It took a "new deal" to cut through the mesh of sovereign rights to which every American government from Theodore to Franklin D. Roosevelt had clung stiffly. In 1933 the latter joined President Arias of the Panama Republic in a joint statement interpreting the disputed clauses of the Hay-Bunau-Va-

rilla Treaty in the sense desired by the Panamanians.² Moreover, asserting that as a sovereign nation Panama was entitled "to take advantage of the commercial opportunities inherent in its geographical situation," the two governments signed a treaty three years later which limited the patronage of the commissaries to officers and employees of the Canal Zone and closed the Zone to all general trade. The treaty, which went unratified for another three years, brightened Panama's hopes for prosperity and added to her sense of dignity.

There were two other questions affecting the integrity of Panama under the Hay-Bunau-Varilla Treaty. Cautious toward the Republic's ability to maintain public order, John Hay reserved the right to intervene anywhere in Panamanian territory; but just as in the case of Cuba the question of exercising the right took an unforeseen turn. In 1905 the political opponents of the Panamanian administration, claiming unfairness in the elections, appealed to the Roosevelt administration to supervise the local campaign. The policy formulated under the influence of Elihu Root toward this issue was to refuse interference in the elections and intervene only if actual disorder occurred. Not to be discouraged by a first rebuff, however, the Panamanian Liberals returned to the plea for supervision again and again in later campaigns; in 1928, for instance, they cloaked their disappointment with a charge that the United States by its act of abstention was permitting a corrupt tyranny to continue in power. On the other hand, the American government had early drawn the teeth from the prospects of armed revolt on the Isthmus by persuading the local government to disband its army. Whatever military force remained on the Isthmus after 1904 was solely American, and was generally confined to the Canal Zone. In spite of the general rule of abstention from interference in local politics, the military was used occasionally to supervise elections when there was thought to be risk of disorder.

Threats of disorderly elections proved by no means the only cause for American solicitude. The notorious red-light districts of Panama City and Colón were the scenes of frequent clashes between American soldiers and sailors and the local police. On at least one occasion in 1918 the military commander of the Canal Zone super-

² The Hay-Bunau-Varilla Treaty declared that the United States should have "the use, occupation and control" of the Zone "for the construction, maintenance, operation, sanitation and protection" of the proposed Canal. It also granted the United States "all the rights, power and authority" within the Zone, "which it would possess if it were sovereign" (Malloy, *Treaties and Conventions*, II, 350). Panama put emphasis on the first sentence, the United States on the second.

imposed a police force of his own in the disorderly districts. Frequent injuries inflicted on sailors by the municipal police, armed with high-powered rifles, brought chronic complaints from the State Department at Washington and countercharges on the part of the Panama government that the United States was interfering with its independence. But the most stunning blow was dealt by Washington in 1921 with respect to a threat by Panama to wage war against its neighbor, Costa Rica. Many years before, Costa Rica had been awarded by arbitration a section of disputed territory along the boundary; but in spite of its agreement to accept the award as final Panama had ignored the findings of the arbitrator and remained in possession. Suddenly in February 1921 Costa Rica descended with force upon the contested area and occupied it. When the Panamanians attempted to reply in kind, they received brusque notice from Washington to honor the original award and leave the territory to the Costa Ricans, and further mutterings on their part brought a show of force from the direction of the Canal Zone. Panama was shown unmistakably that she could take no liberties with the American guaranty.

One final servitude the Hay-Bunau-Varilla Treaty imposed on the Republic. In addition to the Canal Zone, the treaty read, Panama "further grants to the United States in perpetuity the use, occupation and control of any other lands and waters *outside the zone* . . . which may be necessary and convenient for the construction, operation, sanitation and protection of the said canal." Interpreted in a reckless spirit of aggrandizement by the paramount power, this provision might lead to the constriction and eventual death of the Republic. One of the largest expropriations made by the United States under it occurred in 1912, when it became evident that the waters of the man-made Gatún Lake would extend on both sides beyond the Canal Zone into Panamanian territory. This obvious need for additional land brought no murmurs; but the case was different in 1918 when the military authorities of the Canal Zone suddenly demanded Taboga Island, a prized health resort lying outside the harbor of Panama City. The Panamanians expostulated but won only a temporary delay. Two years later Taboga Island was converted into a valuable fort guarding the western gate of the Canal.

Uneasy as to the future, the Panamanian government now tried to induce the United States to set a definite limit to its defense requirements; the most that it could win, however, was a pledge to substitute requests for territory through the regular diplomatic channels for the harsh method of requisition at the hands of the

Canal Zone military authority. A sop to Panamanian dignity, the new procedure merely softened the blow. Using the same arguments of the need for defending the Canal, the United States set a brake upon the economic development of the Republic, especially in the matter of trans-isthmian communication. All suggestions of building a highway to connect Panama City and Colón were emphatically frowned upon in Washington.

As we have seen, the shroud was somewhat lifted from the Panamanians by the Treaty of 1936. They were guaranteed protection in their business against the competition of the Canal Zone; having apparently reached political maturity, they were relieved of the pain of American intervention in their domestic affairs in the future; and they were accorded the dignity of partnership with the United States in all matters pertaining to mutual defense. The Republic bound itself to "reach the necessary understanding," should additional territory be required from it for this purpose. The first use of this clause came five years later, in March 1941, when an arrangement for the development of new air bases on Panama territory by the United States Army was announced. Difficulties over the building of the highway between the two cities now ceased. It was evident that the defense needs of the Isthmus had shifted with the new stress on air warfare, and Panama speedily got its long-deferred road built partly at American expense. Further exchanges of favors followed. The Republic promptly joined the United States in war on all three of the Axis powers in December 1941; its practical contribution lay in the foiling of enemy agents who might otherwise use its soil for sabotaging the Canal. In the following May the United States secured additional defense sites for use during the war, and in return agreed, subject to approval by Congress, to give up its extensive property rights in Panama's two cities. These rights included ownership of the water and sewerage systems, which had been installed by the United States, and the majority of the town lots, which had been inherited through the old Panama Railroad Company. Ownership of the railroad, which had been in operation since 1855, had gone to the United States with the Canal Zone under the treaty of 1903. By joint resolution in May 1943, Congress authorized these changes and also the payment of compensation to Panama for her share in the expense of building the trans-isthmian highway.

These gestures were typical of the finesse with which American diplomacy courted Panama's goodwill after 1933. The administration regarded that goodwill as priceless, especially after the coming of war in 1939. The Treaty of 1936, approved by the Senate after

three years of opposition from the Army and Navy, was a graceful gesture on the part of the United States, a polite bow to the *amour propre* of Panama. Tact in consultation and extreme liberality in property matters replaced the easier, somewhat drumhead methods of former years. But the essential political and geographic fact remains unaltered. Panamanian independence is subordinate to one supreme end: the effective defense of the Canal.³

CHAPTER 17

THE PROTECTORATE OF NICARAGUA, 1909-1934

THE STORMY PETREL of Central America in the opening years of the century was José Santos Zelaya, dictator-president of Nicaragua. Bent on extending his personal sway over the neighbor countries to his north, Zelaya foiled all efforts at peace among the five republics. In 1907 he invaded Honduras and unseated its president; and he was about to set a similar example in Salvador when the United States and Mexico spoiled his plans by calling a conference at Washington. A series of agreements looking toward a federation of the five republics was the result: a Central American Court of Justice was established, the principle of compulsory arbitration of disputes was pledged, and each country promised strict neutrality toward the internal affairs of its neighbors. Zelaya, however, very shortly resumed his former intrigues; Nicaragua again became the home for conspiracies against his chief rival, Cabrera of Guatemala;

³ An important political crisis in Panama, having direct bearing on relations with the United States, occurred in October 1941. The anti-American president, Arnulfo Arias, saw a fine chance to vent his spleen on the United States. But he met swift defeat and vanished to Nicaragua and later to Argentina, from where he plotted his return to power. Rumors in 1944 that such an attempt would be made caused the existing president to dissolve the Panamanian Congress and proclaim a state of siege. Arias' supporters then escaped to Costa Rica to set up a government-in-exile, and late in the summer of 1945 Arias returned in person to Panama to make faces at the United States.

For an analysis of this crisis in relation to inter-American affairs, see chapter 21 below. See also Philip W. Bonsal, "The United States and Panama," *The Department of State Bulletin*, X (No. 240 [January 29, 1944]), 125-32.

and Honduras, one of the weakest of the republics, remained the potential battleground between the forces of the two dictators. On his part Cabrera was conspicuously friendly toward the United States, in contrast to the spiteful attitude the Nicaraguan was fond of taking.

Conscious of the strategic value of his country in relation to a possible second canal route, Zelaya felt safe in taking liberties with the United States. There were three ways in which he gave offense. Greedy over the precious canal concession which he had the power to bestow, he was known to be angling for a foreign intrigue. Possibly he hoped that by so doing he could frighten the United States into bidding for an option at an extravagant figure. In the second place the Nicaraguan was headstrong on financial matters. Since the trouble with Cuba and Santo Domingo, the American government had declared itself in favor of Caribbean republics doing their banking in New York. Zelaya did just the opposite; he turned ostentatiously to Europe, and in May 1909 succeeded in refinancing the entire Nicaraguan debt through an international syndicate formed in London.

The contrast between the Nicaraguan financial position in 1909 and that of the Dominican Republic four years before needs emphasis. Nicaragua faced no emergency; her debt might be large—the refunding loan was for £1,250,000—but it was as yet neither chaotic nor excessive; and there was no demand from Europe for intervention or protection of the financial interests. The Taft administration in Washington had been affronted, however, and it could play upon its own fears that Zelaya was preparing a Pandora's box for the future.

Animosity between the Nicaraguan and the American private concerns that operated in his country smoldered through the years. The field offices of the three principal American interests were located in Bluefields, the chief town of the eastern, or Mosquito, shore. In this region the Indian tribe of the same name had formerly been "autonomous," under an arrangement between Great Britain and Nicaragua in 1860. No doubt finding the Indians more pliable, the private interests had wished to keep them autonomous. Zelaya nevertheless had won the first round of the contest with the American interests in 1894 when he had succeeded in incorporating Mosquito directly into the Republic. From time to time thereafter he tampered with their legal rights, capriciously revoking their concessions and exploring other ways in which to mulct them. One of the most important of the American concerns at Bluefields was owned by a

Pittsburgh family, for whom the Secretary of State, Philander C. Knox, had at one time been counsel. What communication, if any, passed between the family and Mr. Knox in 1909 is unknown. An improper connection between the two is not to be inferred from a previous professional relationship. Suffice it to say that his knowledge of Zelaya's activities gave the Secretary of State a poor opinion of the Nicaraguan's integrity.

It was not hard to stir up an insurrection against the dictator and to hold the Mosquito shore against him. Zelaya's political foes were numerous; in October 1909 they were induced to join hands against him and were given assurances of financial assistance and armed support in the vicinity of Bluefields. The secretary of the company, which was controlled from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, one Adolfo Díaz, was reputed to be the intermediary and the paymaster of the revolution. For the time being the rebels held the lowland; but their cause was hopeless in the healthful upland country of western Nicaragua, where lived the bulk of the population. Zelaya had a strong following at León, one of the three principal towns in the interior, and the Nicaraguan Congress was under his control. The rebellion thus split the Republic into two sections, with a prospect of the president remaining in control of the western half. At this point his spleen against Americans again got the better of his discretion. Early in November his men captured two American filibusters laying mines on the San Juan River. The summary punishment meted out to the captives gave the government in Washington the opening for which it apparently had been waiting. Mr. Knox had been apprised of the plans for revolution in advance; he had previously shown his aversion toward Zelaya in 1908, when he had neglected to return the American minister to his post in Managua, the capital. He now read Zelaya a severe lecture on "tyranny," charged him with no longer representing "the ideals and the will of a majority of the Nicaraguans," and formally severed relations. Zelaya hung on for another month, his position growing weaker when an American naval vessel appeared in the harbor of Corinto on the west side of the Republic. The United States instituted no attack upon him, but it none the less succeeded in humbling him; he resigned in December and vanished from his country forever.

Zelaya's successor was Señor Madriz, a worthy fellow-Liberal of León, elected provisional president by the Nicaraguan Congress. So far as can be ascertained Madriz was a competent executive and represented the will of the majority. He was tainted with Zelayaism, however, of which the United States was now resolved to be rid.

His attempts to recover the Mosquito shore encountered a stone wall of resistance: seven hundred Marines, landed from American naval vessels in Bluefields harbor, created a neutral zone in that vicinity. No fighting was allowed where American-owned property was located. The effect suggested a permanent detachment of the Mosquito shore unless the Nicaraguan regime could satisfy the United States. Madriz then resigned, and the insurgent general, Estrada, was made provisional president. The rebel coalition split apart, however, Estrada gave way to Adolfo Díaz, the bookkeeper from Bluefields, in the spring of 1911, and Díaz in turn was the victim of a violent revolution which raged through the year 1912.

Realizing their weakness, Estrada and Díaz had each in his turn asked for a binding agreement with the United States applying the principles of the Platt Amendment and pledging armed support against insurrection. A formal alliance the Taft administration could not give, for it had already aroused the jealous mistrust of Democratic senators in Washington. But the attack on Díaz was a challenge to American prestige, which had placed him in office. The American administration had announced itself opposed to "Zelayaism," that is, to the type of irresponsible dictatorship that Zelaya had represented. It was now bound by the moral necessity of supporting the puppet regime it had set up, and it fulfilled the obligation with alacrity. Marines converged upon Managua and León from both coasts and in less than two months smashed the rebellion. Díaz was then made president in November 1912 on a four-year basis, the leading rebel, General Mena, was deported to Panama; and so thoroughly did the Nicaraguans learn their lesson that it was possible to reduce the American occupying force to a mere legation guard of one hundred men stationed in the capital city. For nearly thirteen years no other force was necessary.

This does not mean that American pressure was unnecessary at election time, however. At the expiration of Díaz's term in 1916 the American minister came out openly in support of Emilio Chamorro, an associate of the president in the revolution of 1909 and subsequently Nicaraguan minister in Washington. Indiscreet attempts by the Liberals to elect a former friend of Zelaya were frustrated; their candidate was not even allowed admission to the country.

The Liberals ultimately got their opportunity in 1924 after a new election law, drawn by an American experienced in Nicaraguan conditions, had been put into force. The country seemed so stable by this time that even the legation guard was withdrawn the following year; less than three weeks elapsed from the time of its withdrawal,

however, before Chamorro, who had served in turn as president and as minister to Washington, opened up a fresh intrigue. Chamorro was bent on expelling the Liberal president, Sacasa, and restoring the Conservatives to power with himself as their head; but he now encountered the refusal of Washington to recognize him. Furthermore, the State Department succeeded in associating the other Central American republics with it. Marines were landed at the ports for the protection of American life and property, but otherwise the administration refused to be tempted into undertaking armed intervention. The sequel to this was a conference of Nicaraguan politicians of both parties under American protection, and the election by the Nicaraguan Congress of Adolfo Díaz to fill out the unexpired term of the deposed Liberal president. Some of the Liberals attempted to bolt when they heard that Mexican filibusters were on the way to their aid; but the American government discouraged this with a strong statement that it could not permit foreign interference in the affairs of Nicaragua. In this way the United States tided over a political upheaval in the Republic without becoming involved with intervention as in 1912.

So much for the narrative of political events in Nicaragua during the life of the protectorate. The foundations on which American intervention rested are to be found less in the desire to encourage and protect private business interests than in the feeling of uneasiness first engendered by the policies of Zelaya with reference to the financing of the Nicaraguan debt and the bidding for a canal concession. To those subjects we now return.

From the puppet regime in 1911 Philander C. Knox had secured an agreement calculated to substitute financial dependence on the United States for the existing indebtedness to the European syndicate. Made privy to the convention, a group of New York bankers agreed to advance fifteen million dollars to the Nicaraguan government for the purpose of refunding the loans outstanding and building a railroad from Managua to the eastern coast. To safeguard the loan the bankers were given a lien upon the customs, which were to be placed in charge of a collector-general to be named by them with the approval of the president of the United States. A convention of similar import had already been concluded with Honduras, whose finances had become fantastic. That country, with a population smaller and poorer than Nicaragua's, was reeling under a debt with a face value of one hundred and twenty-five million dollars. Surprisingly, however, Honduras stood off American encroachments.

The Hondurans rejected the financial convention made with them,

but the Nicaraguan Congress approved the arrangements outlined above. Anticipating action by the Senate, and perhaps fearful of frustration at the hands of that body, the Taft administration supported the bankers in consummating their own arrangements with the regime in Managua. An initial advance of \$1,500,000 was made and a competent collector-general of the customs selected, a man who had had experience in the Philippine civil service. Meanwhile the treaty only gathered dust in the files of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, which partly for partisan reasons refused to report it out. The same result was accomplished without the treaty, nevertheless, since the Executive Branch continued to work quietly with the bankers as they made their own terms with Managua.

There was a question what the situation would be once the Wilson administration had been installed. Wilson and Bryan both had raised their voices against bankers during the campaign, and the Taft administration had been subjected to a scathing attack because of its "dollar diplomacy." Mr. Knox had described his policy as one calculated to give American private capital the advantage in the Western Hemisphere, to the ultimate exclusion of European, the better to promote the dominance of the United States. But Mr. Bryan and his successor, Robert Lansing, to whom President Wilson largely left the details of policy toward Latin-American republics, thought and acted in terms virtually identical with those of Mr. Knox. They both advocated excluding European capital from Latin America and making the United States the guarantor of Latin-American finances. Bryan suggested the direct extension of credit by the American government to the end that Latin America generally might be relieved of its foreign debts and the United States given "such an increased influence . . . that we could prevent revolutions, promote education, and advance stable and just government . . ."¹ In a closely reasoned confidential memorandum on the Monroe Doctrine and the Caribbean policy of the United States, Mr. Lansing queried whether or not the time had come for the United States in the interests of its own security to forbid Latin-American countries from accepting European loans.

Neither of these suggestions was embodied in the official policy of the United States; but the Democratic administration after a short period of hesitation resumed the practices of Mr. Knox. The bankers were encouraged to work out loan agreements with Nicaragua and her Central American sisters, a railway and other invest-

¹ Quoted by Ray Stannard Baker, *Woodrow Wilson, Life and Letters*, IV (1931), 433.

ments in Nicaragua went forward, and the European obligations contracted by Zelaya were gradually liquidated.

Still another project initiated by Mr. Knox was strengthened and carried through to a successful conclusion by Bryan and Lansing. This was a canal convention which Knox negotiated in February 1913, less than a month before the end of the Taft administration. The convention gave the United States an option on the Nicaraguan route and a lease, with the right to fortify, of Great Corn and Little Corn Islands on the eastern side and of a base in the Gulf of Fonseca on the west. For these concessions the United States agreed to pay three million dollars. Knox's treaty met the same fate at the hands of the Foreign Relations Committee as his loan convention, Bryan, however, negotiated an almost identical treaty the following year, reinforced by a "Platt Amendment" provision. This conferred upon the United States an unlimited right of intervention, a treaty right which the Nicaraguan insurgents had tried to give in 1911 but which Mr. Knox had not dared to accept. Bryan perhaps felt he would not encounter the same resistance in the Senate or the country as his predecessor. He wrote Wilson privately.

While the Platt amendment provision is asked for by the Nicaraguan government, and is intended for the benefit of that government, still I think that it is of advantage to us, in that it will give us the right to do that which we might be called upon to do anyhow. We cannot escape the responsibilities of our position, and this is an opportune time for us to secure the necessary treaty provision, as we can secure it at their request.²

Bryan had no better luck with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee than Knox; they forced him to make a new treaty, minus the Platt Amendment clause, and since Costa Rica and Salvador complained bitterly that their rights were infringed and their independence threatened by the proposed fortifications near the terminus of the canal, the Senate withheld its approval for a year and a half and then insisted on a reservation stating in general terms that the rights of these states would not be affected. The Senate's well-meaning gesture made not the slightest impression. Salvador and Costa Rica carried their complaints, which they based upon former treaties with Nicaragua, to the Central American Court of Justice. The court found in their favor; but its judgment was ignored and it shortly after broke up.

The fact is, of course, that Nicaragua was a United States protectorate long before the Senate even debated the Canal convention.

² Quoted from the Bryan Papers by W. Stull Holt, *Treaties Defeated by the Senate* (Baltimore, 1933), p. 241.

Its government was American-created and American-maintained; American Marines had intervened in force in 1912, and their presence continued to be a factor until 1925. The coup d'état of that year had threatened to plunge the republic into another wild period of anarchy, as we noted above; but skillful diplomacy on the part of Washington had averted this and, by so doing, had avoided the necessity of a general military occupation of the country. The real beginning of the liquidation of the Nicaraguan protectorate began at this time, though the opposition in the United States did not appreciate the distinction between the government's policy in 1926 and that which it had pursued under Knox and even Wilson. There was perhaps a louder outcry in the United States and the Latin-American countries than had been heard before, and it was plain that even the limited type of intervention adopted in 1926 aroused popular disfavor.

To meet the mounting opposition, President Coolidge dispatched Colonel Henry L. Stimson, Secretary of War under Taft, as special emissary to Managua. Colonel Stimson did not limit his investigations to one party; on the contrary, he succeeded in winning from all factions but one a pledge to lay down their arms. It was agreed that Diaz should finish out the presidential term to 1928, that in the meantime a new electoral law drawn so as to free the elections from the control of the party in office should be enacted, and that a Nicaraguan constabulary officered for the time being by Americans should be established and empowered to supervise the elections in the future. The exception to the agreement was General Sandino, who fled with his band into the wild country of the north. The continued depredations of this rebel chieftain, nevertheless, did not deter the American government from washing its hands of Nicaraguan politics, even when the familiar cry for help resounded from American citizens in the Republic. As Secretary of State in the Hoover administration, Colonel Stimson advised all Americans in the interior of Nicaragua to withdraw to the coast, whence they would be evacuated, the Marines were not reinforced, even though Sandino had ambushed a small detachment in 1929, and the last contingent was withdrawn at the beginning of 1933.

Sandino reached a truce with the Nicaraguan administration in 1931, but he was at length assassinated. Five years later the man who was reputed to have ordered his shooting, General Somoza, commander of the palace guards at Managua, became president of the Republic. And in 1940, at a time when circumstances required a broad conciliation of all Latin-American republics, President Somoza

was entertained lavishly at the White House by Franklin D. Roosevelt and accorded full military honors at the national capital of the United States.³

It would seem that the prolonged American intervention in Nicaragua had but limited value. The protectorate was instituted on the assumption that all Caribbean countries, Nicaragua particularly, should be made financial vassals of the United States. To this the Wilson administration contributed the view that only constitutional government should be recognized and fostered. It remained for Secretary Lansing to formulate the classic statement that vassalage of this sort was essential to the security of the United States.⁴ Yet the Nicaraguan regime at that period, like so many of its Caribbean sisters, could hardly be described as genuinely constitutional. European capital was not driven from the Caribbean, moreover, nor even from Central America. The experiences of Honduras and Guatemala, with much larger debts to European holders than Nicaragua, indicate that Taft and Knox, Wilson, Bryan, and Lansing were moved by phantom fears. The Guatemalan debt to British investors was redeemed through a lien on the coffee revenues of that republic, which it took a British threat to use force in 1913 to make good. The British government insisted on its right to make the threat, and Mr. Knox, after vain efforts at persuasion with the Guatemalans, stepped aside. The mere sending of a British cruiser then brought the desired response. The Honduran debt was the largest and most hopeless; the greater share of it was sacrificed by British investors and an agreement was made after 1918 to pay off the remainder in annual installments.

The withdrawal of the Marines from Nicaragua of course did not alter the Canal Convention of 1914. That convention, with the vested right to fortify bases on both sides of Central America, plus the goodwill of the people and governments therein, remains a permanent support to the system of isthmian and hemispheric security.

³ Somoza was still holding the fort at the close of 1945. A plot to dislodge him, made by Nicaraguan exiles operating in Costa Rica, had failed.

⁴ Mr. Lansing's statement formed part of a confidential memorandum on the Monroe Doctrine, November 24, 1915. United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States. The Lansing Papers* (2 vols., Washington, D.C., 1940), II, 468-70. Hereafter referred to as *The Lansing Papers*.

CHAPTER 18

THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION, 1910-1943

THE YEAR 1910 marked the beginning of a revolution in Mexico. Currents much deeper than those in any of the sister republics of Middle America carried this movement along. far from being merely a struggle for power among various rebel factions, the Mexican revolution proved to be a determined attempt by the lowly peon to recapture and redivide the national wealth. The principles of the revolution were laid down in Article 27 of the Constitution of 1917. (1) In the nation was vested the ownership of all lands, waters, and subsurface materials. The large estates (*haciendas*) were to be divided and developed in small holdings; the ancient *ejidos*, or communal farms, which had become all but extinct in the preceding half-century, were to be revived and assigned lands from the adjoining private properties sufficient to meet their needs. Private property was not to be abolished but was subject to expropriation whenever the national interest demanded; the owners were promised compensation. In the case of minerals, petroleum, and other subsoil resources "the ownership of the nation is inalienable and may not be lost by prescription", nevertheless, the government was empowered to grant concessions to private corporations for the exploitation of these.

(2) The Constitution, moreover, aimed at keeping the national heritage from alien control. It stated:

Only Mexicans by birth or naturalization and Mexican companies have the right to acquire ownership in lands, waters and their appurtenances, or to obtain concessions to develop mines, waters or mineral fuels in the Republic of Mexico. The nation may grant the same right to foreigners, provided they agree before the Department of Foreign Affairs to be considered Mexicans in respect to such property, and accordingly not to invoke the protection of their Governments in respect to the same, under penalty, in case of breach, of forfeiture to the nation of property so acquired.

A special safeguard was added for the benefit of coastal and border lands. "Within a zone of 100 kilometers from the frontiers," said the Constitution, "and of 50 kilometers from the sea coast no foreigners shall under any conditions acquire direct ownership of lands and waters."

To state the sum of the matter: Along the frontiers and the seacoasts, places the most vulnerable to foreign and especially American penetration, no foreigner could acquire a vested property right. In fact no foreigner, being a citizen of another country, could hold property or operate a concession anywhere in Mexico. It was only when he expressly agreed in advance to give up his nationality and be considered Mexican in so far as he held Mexican property or concessions that the legality of his holdings could be recognized. This was the familiar Calvo clause, to be found in virtually all agreements made between the Mexican government and foreign interests both before and after the Constitution of 1917. The name comes from Señor Calvo, the Argentine jurist who in 1868 expounded the doctrine that foreigners living in a country or carrying on business within its limits should receive no protection in their persons or property that the government of that country did not give to its own people. The Calvo doctrine was aimed at insulating the Latin-American countries from intervention by foreign governments on the ground of mistreatment of their nationals. Whatever the standard of justice, political competency, and governmental honesty that prevailed in a Latin-American country, the foreigner must accept them and his government must refrain from helping him if things went wrong. In Mexico it had been customary long before the revolution, even during the regime of Díaz, to insert Calvo clauses in the contracts with foreign companies. A typical example is the following, incorporated in the contract with the North American Dredging Company in 1912:

The contractor and all persons who, as employees or in any other capacity, may be engaged in the execution of the work under this contract either directly or indirectly, shall be considered as Mexicans in all matters, within the Republic of Mexico, concerning the execution of such work and fulfillment of this contract. They shall not claim, nor shall they have, with regard to the interests and the business connected with this contract, any other rights or means to enforce the same than those granted by the laws of the Republic to Mexicans, nor shall they enjoy any other rights than those established in favor of Mexicans. They are consequently deprived of any rights as aliens, and under no conditions shall the intervention of foreign diplomatic agents be permitted in any matter related to this contract.¹

From foreign companies and individuals the Mexican authorities had no particular difficulty in wringing consent to a clause of

¹ Quoted from Frederick Sherwood Dunn, *The Diplomatic Protection of Americans in Mexico* (New York, 1933), p. 407.

this kind, and the requirement in the Constitution of 1917 was not new. But in private contracts the clause was merely part of an agreement between the Mexican government and the private individual; the latter could not appeal his case against Mexico to his own government. There was nothing whatever to prevent the foreign government from interfering on its own account, however. Latin-American republics had long pleaded for the adoption of the Calvo doctrine as a rule of international law, but the United States and European governments countered with the proposition that a certain minimum standard of justice is essential under international law. Gross abuse of one's own nationals, they held, could not be used as a pretext by a Latin-American country for disregard of the elementary rights of foreigners domiciled on their soil. It was contrary to international law, for example, for a government to deny justice to the citizen of another state. But denial of justice invoked many different issues, it might mean a simple refusal of permission to use the courts of the land, or it might mean that the courts were so incompetent and corrupt that appeal to them would be the merest mockery. In countries habituated to dictatorship, military rule, and frequent revolution, standards of justice were hardly equivalent to the practices of well-established governments. It was this that gave point to the controversy over the Calvo doctrine. Too many Latin-American countries were the victims of political immorality, revolution, and incompetency for their plea for nonintervention to find favor with older and better governments.

Beyond a doubt the Mexican revolution is the best illustration of this type of problem that has bedeviled American diplomacy. The revolution got in motion slowly, violence, bloodshed, and frequent change of government marked its course, and for some years obscured its deep social implications. By 1910 Americans and Europeans owned and controlled the vast bulk of Mexican lands and resources, Article 27 of the Constitution of 1917 was the manifesto of revolution against alien domination, and the attempt to fulfill the provisions of Article 27 precipitated diplomatic questions that centered around the teachings of Calvo.

Economically Americans had penetrated deep into Mexico long before the revolution. Porfirio Díaz, a president whose terms of office continued unbroken, with one exception, from 1877 to 1910, had invited foreign capital into his country on a large scale and had furnished it every protection. Hardly a question of the actual safety of foreign life and property arose during the regime of this extraordinarily competent dictator. American interests had built the greater

part of the railways of the republic and had engaged in extensive mining and smelting operations, to land and cattle companies, incorporated under the laws of California, Illinois, Ohio, New York, and other states, had gone huge grants of Mexican lands with an acreage in some cases as high as two million. Some of these properties were intended to be held for speculation, others were exploited for the cotton, rubber, sugar, and other products they could yield. The multiplication of the number of *haciendas* in American hands emphasized a movement that had appeared in Mexican agriculture long before the time of Díaz, this was the increasing pressure of private enterprise, encouraged under the Constitution of 1857, on the traditional *ejido*, the Indian village whose members held collective title to their lands. The land laws of Mexico in the nineteenth century stimulated private ownership at the expense of the *ejidatarios*, *haciendas* and *ranchos* (moderate-sized farms) appeared, and the *ejidos* broke up, the independent heads of Indian families becoming peons, or wage-earners, on the property of private owners. A remorseless system of debt-slavery, which had developed from the practice of paying the peons in tokens or orders on the *hacienda store*, gradually closed in on the poor laborers; most *hacienda* owners took more from their workers in the form of high prices than they paid out in wages, and the result was a vicious credit system passed on from generation to generation, holding a peon to his *hacienda* for the unpaid debts of his father and grandfather.

The *haciendas*, owned both by native Mexicans and foreigners, are known to have controlled in 1910 the greater part of the agricultural land, a much smaller portion was divided among the forty-eight thousand *ranchos*, properties whose size did not exceed one thousand hectares.² The *ranchos* presented no serious social problem, though like the great estates they had helped in breaking up the ancient form of communal farming and in indirectly undermining the freedom of the Indian peasant. Few, if any, of the *ejidatarios* could adapt themselves to a system of private ownership, most of them either sold out their rights at a nominal figure or saw the village lands re-allotted by government decree to a land company or a *hacendado*. On their part, the *ranchos* were the result of purchases made in good faith by individual farmers, many of whom were American and British. In the vanguard of American immigration into Mexico after 1880 were bands of Mormon colonists, by 1912 these people, said to number four thousand, were grouped in ten prosperous colonies throughout the states of Chihuahua and Sonora. They were part

² A hectare is equivalent to 2.471 acres.

of a population of fifteen thousand American farmers who had become permanent residents but not citizens of Mexico. American-owned *ranchos* and *haciendas* could be found in all parts of Mexico, though they tended to concentrate in the northern states not far from the border and on the Isthmus of Tehuantepec.

By far the most meteoric of the foreign enterprises in Mexico was the petroleum industry. Originating from the explorations of Edward L. Doheny of California in 1900, the production of Mexican oil reached gusher proportions six years later. Profiting from contracts made with the Mexican railroads and especially from the world scramble for oil during the war years of 1914-1918, the industry mushroomed to dizzy heights by 1920. No wells in the world could compete with the Mexican in average daily flow, by way of comparison, in that year the daily output of American wells averaged 4.9 barrels per unit in contrast to 1,800 barrels per unit in Mexico. On the other hand, the discrepancy was partly offset by the tendency of Mexican wells to sudden exhaustion, in the following decade they proved less lucrative and Mexico declined as a prime producer of oil.

The ownership of Mexican oil was divided between American and British companies, the latter entered the field after 1906, encouraged by Díaz as an offset to the rapidly expanding American development. By the end of 1918 the total investment was about equally divided between the American and British groups, with the Standard Oil companies taking over the greater part of the former and the Royal Dutch Shell absorbing the several British interests. The total original American investment was valued at over two hundred million dollars, a sum which was represented not so much by the lands actually under production as by the vast outlay on lands held in reserve. The work of prospecting, drilling, and holding large tracts of oil land in reserve accounts for an unusually large percentage of the capital investment in the petroleum industry.

Practically all of the oil lands and much of the agricultural land held in foreign lands were within the coastal or frontier belts from which foreigners were to be excluded under the Constitution of 1917. In making the grants, however, the Díaz regime had skillfully imposed conditions to prevent aliens from appealing to their governments for protection—the use of the Calvo clause, the imposition of matriculation regulations requiring aliens to take up residence within the country, and the rule that foreigners must secure special permission in order to get land near the border. The right of ownership in fee simple was recognized with respect to the surface of lands; in

the case of mines the Mexicans followed the Spanish principle of retaining title over the subsoil in the hands of the state and of farming out the right to exploit the mines to private concessions. Doubt arose over the status of the oil companies' properties. They acquired their rights through purchase or lease of the surface, rather than in the form of a concession from the government. Naturally they clung to the view therefore that the land was theirs, especially since, at the time the original purchases were made, the mining code of the Republic reserved subsoil rights only in minerals, a change in the code in 1909 had added mineral fuels to the reserved list, thereby giving color to the later charge that the Mexican petroleum laws were retroactive. However that may be, the oil companies continued to explore and develop their properties for many years, even after the Constitution of 1917 was promulgated; investments continued to be made and new wells to be brought in.

The first embroilments of the United States in the Mexican revolution had nothing to do with questions of property rights. An insurrection led by Francisco Madero in 1910 had overthrown the aged Díaz, but Madero was himself overthrown and supposedly slain in February 1913 by one of his own generals, Huerta. On the ground that Huerta was a usurper President Wilson refused him recognition, in April 1914 Huerta's men temporarily arrested a boat's crew of American sailors at Tampico and refused an American demand for apology and salute to the flag, and when a German steamer attempted to run arms to Huerta through Vera Cruz the United States shelled and occupied the port. Huerta was forced to flee, largely through the initiative of the United States, of the two rivals for power who remained in Mexico, Pancho Villa and Venustiano Carranza, the latter showed signs of carrying out a genuine revolution through a series of decrees expropriating agrarian property, suspending the drilling for oil, and raising the taxes on mining products. The American government challenged all three decrees and wrung from Carranza as the price of recognition a guaranty that lives and property of foreigners would be protected. In revenge for the recognition gained by his rival, Villa and his band crossed the border on March 9, 1916, and shot up the town of Columbus, New Mexico. An American army under General Pershing followed Villa deep into Mexico, but after more than six months of vain searching it failed to drive the bandit band from their mountain lair.

Carranza had posed as a Constitutionalist. After some prodding he summoned a constitutional convention at Querétaro in February

1917, the work of which was the constitution already mentioned. Its distinguishing features were found in its Articles 27 and 123, the former containing the provisions for the expropriation of private property in land and the latter embracing a drastic labor charter aimed at foreign control of industry. Carranza was formally inaugurated under this constitution in May 1917, but the American government refused him the honor of full *de jure* recognition (it had granted only *de facto* recognition in 1915). Anxious to conciliate the Mexicans now that it was at war with Germany, the United States nevertheless resolved to keep a club in its hands for the protection of property rights against the possible contingencies of the new Mexican constitution. "Although it may be impossible," wrote the Secretary of State to the American Ambassador April 28, 1917, "to accept those provisions of the new constitution which are in contravention of the international obligations of Mexico, it is desired for reasons of high policy not to force an issue on these questions. They will be met when they arise."⁸

The central issue was over the question of compensation. Mexico was groping toward a far-reaching redistribution of the land, a revitalization of the *ejidos*, and a nationalization of the railroads, the mines, and the petroleum, and all other natural resources of the country. The revolution was a confused but none the less persistent effort to loosen the grip which foreign capital held on the Republic. American investments alone exceeded a billion dollars; 78 per cent of the mines, 72 per cent of the smelters, 58 per cent of the oil, and 68 per cent of the rubber business were in American hands by 1919, and virtually all the rest was under British, Dutch, French, or German ownership. The Constitution might guarantee compensation to all, but in reality there was no way of paying indemnity, the magnitude of the interests involved in comparison with the general poverty of the country made this out of the question. The United States professed sympathy with the revolution; nevertheless it took its stand in 1915 on the principle that payment of an indemnity in full must be made for the expropriation of private property. This was a rule of international law, the Wilson administration held, and from 1915 until November 1941, when the questions seemed to be on the road to final settlement, the position of the United States remained essentially unchanged.

The policy of Mexico, on the other hand, was to whittle away at the foreign-owned properties as drastically as it dared. Little was accomplished by Carranza and his successor, General Alvaro Obre-

⁸ *The Lansing Papers, 1914-1920* (2 vols., Washington, D.C., 1940), II, 567

gón. A tax decree of 1918 which seemed to challenge the right of the oil companies to the subsoil brought prompt remonstrances from Washington, and the companies ignored the law. Two years later Secretary of State Hughes took advantage of an insurrection, which unseated Carranza and placed Obregón in office, to propose a treaty by which Mexico would guarantee not to make Article 27 retroactive. Hughes declared:

The fundamental question . . . is the safeguarding of property rights against confiscation. Mexico is free to adopt any policy which she pleases with respect to her public lands, but she is not free to destroy without compensation valid titles which have been obtained by American citizens under Mexican laws. A confiscatory policy strikes not only at the interests of particular individuals but at the foundations of international intercourse. . . .⁴

The issue between the two countries was now at deadlock. For Obregón the price of American recognition was his signature to the proposed treaty, the Mexican leader badly needed American support, but agreement to the treaty meant virtual defeat for the revolution. This eventuality Obregón was determined not to bring about. He was the first Mexican president to make a beginning with a solution of the agrarian problem by expropriating private land for the benefit of *ejidos*, in compensation he offered twenty-year bonds bearing 5 per cent interest, but inasmuch as the Mexican Treasury had no money the bonds were without cash value. Meanwhile the oil companies had resorted to the Mexican Supreme Court for an injunction (*amparo*) against enforcement of the registration decrees of 1918. The intention of Article 27 was unquestionably to bring about simple expropriation of all petroleum property. Nevertheless the Court, possibly with one eye on the diplomatic situation, handed down a ruling partially in favor of the companies: it separated the oil lands on which some positive act had been performed—that is, actual operations conducted—from the lands held in reserve. The commission of a positive act, said the Court, vested the ownership of the property. Inasmuch as from 80 to 90 per cent of all the oil lands were in reserve, the decision was cold comfort for the private owners; but it helped to make a break in the clouds between the two governments.

Secretary Hughes gradually retreated from his position, and a meeting in Mexico City in 1923 between two American and two Mexican commissioners opened the road. On the oil question the

⁴ *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1921, II, 406

Mexicans agreed to honor the ruling of their Supreme Court: the title of the companies to that part of their property where positive acts had been performed was to be respected, and in addition they were promised preference rights as against third parties with respect to the reserved lands. Thus little if any change took place in their position at this time. In the matter of the *ejidos* the American commissioners conceded that the general welfare required the expropriation of lands without cash compensation up to a size of 1,755 hectares per *ejido*, and the Mexicans on their part agreed not to expropriate in excess of this amount except for cash. Diplomatic relations between the two countries were re-established in full on the basis of these compromises, but only as an abstraction was the American principle of "actual, fair, and full compensation" respected. To a general-claims commission set up by the agreements of 1923 was assigned the duty of determining what the compensation should be for both past and future expropriations, the Mexicans, however, at no time offered any payment. In 1938 the American government was still futilely complaining that claims of over twenty years' standing had gone unredressed.

His prolonged tilt with Secretary Hughes and his obvious dependence on American goodwill for support against a rival, de la Huerta, stayed the hand of President Obregón from further progress in the social revolution. A statutory power to embargo shipments of arms was used by the American government to help throttle de la Huerta, while the sources of supply were kept open to the incumbent president. Plutarco Calles, Obregón's successor in 1925, felt no such obligation; rumors of his radical intentions brought from the Coolidge administration a warning that Mexico was "now on trial before the world." Calles responded with a cool rejoinder and the enactment of new agrarian and petroleum legislation by the Mexican Congress before the year was over.

Both of these pieces of legislation aimed a blow at foreign-owned interests and were the most forthright attempts to implement the Constitution of 1917 so far made. The land law forbade foreign acquisition of property in the border and coastal zones; neither could aliens hold shares in Mexican companies that attained such property. The part singled out for special denunciation by Secretary Frank B. Kellogg of the Coolidge administration, however, was the provision that foreigners who owned more than 49 per cent of the total interest in companies controlling rural property could retain their interest only until death or, if corporations, for only ten years. Clearly this part of the law was designed to rid the Republic of the

foreign-controlled *haciendas*, and Kellogg attacked it as confiscatory. A warm exchange ensued between the State Department at Washington and the Mexican foreign office, with the odds in favor of the latter, Señor Saenz was able to demonstrate the similarity between the Mexican law and alien land legislation already in force in several states of the American Union, notably Illinois and Arizona. Moreover, the United States was in a particularly vulnerable position at the time because of its national prohibition law, which under the guise of social betterment had destroyed vested rights without offering compensation.

The Mexican petroleum law of 1925 altered the legal basis for the control of the oil lands from one of property rights to that of concessions. There was some doubt from the beginning, it will be recalled, whether or not the oil companies could claim ownership to the subsoil in fee simple. By putting their claims on a concession basis the law of 1925 tried to resolve the doubt, furthermore, by limiting the term of all petroleum concessions to fifty years it placed the government in a position eventually to nationalize the industry. This measure also was attacked as confiscatory, and the year 1926 marked another deadlock between the two countries, which the conciliatory methods of a new American Ambassador, Mr. Dwight W. Morrow, the following year succeeded in softening.

As things turned out, the bark of President Calles was worse than his bite. Few expropriations of agricultural lands took place during his administration, and the concession basis for the rights of the oil industry was modified from a fifty-year term to one of perpetuity. Most of the companies agreed to the change, no doubt they considered that in getting a promise of a perpetual concession they were in a stronger position legally than they had been on the doubtful basis of a vested-property right.

The controversy between the two governments had been in the main an argument over legal rights; the Mexicans actually took few steps to advance the revolution, though they had undoubtedly scored in their contention that they had a right to discriminate against alien-owned property in land. Again the United States had merely halted the revolution, Mexico still paid lip service to the principle of "actual, fair, and full compensation," and for reasons of policy Calles refrained from making expropriations. Personally he came under the influence of Ambassador Morrow, and the satisfaction of enjoying stable government overcame his former zeal for the social revolution.

On one point of international law the American government had

scored decisively. It had forced a retreat from the Calvo clause and an acknowledgment by the Mexicans of its right to interpose in behalf of its citizens. The purpose in getting waivers from foreigners in their private contracts or concessions had been to avoid the risk of an appeal by them for the protection of their governments. A foreigner who made such an appeal, it will be recalled, was liable to forfeit his rights to the Mexican government. Practically this was a shrewd step taken by the Mexicans to insulate themselves against foreign intervention—an individual would hesitate to run the risk of forfeiture by appealing for help. But the protests instituted by the United States in 1915 had not come as the result of complaints of American property holders in Mexico. The American government had exercised its sovereign right to come to the rescue of its nationals in Mexico. Secretary Kellogg correctly stated the principle as follows:

. . . The right of his state to extend what is known as diplomatic protection can not be waived by the individual. If states by their unilateral acts or citizens by their individual acts were permitted to modify or withhold the application of the principles of international law, the body of rules established by the custom of nations as legally binding upon states would manifestly be broken down.

The right of diplomatic protection is not a personal right, but exists in favor of one state against another. It is a privilege which one state under the rules of international law can extend or withhold in behalf of one of its nationals.⁹

As late as 1934 remarkably little had been accomplished in altering the structure of Mexican society. Two-thirds of the more than eight thousand *haciendas* had never been molested, 94 per cent of the area and 90 per cent of the value of all the land in farms were reported by the census of 1930 to be owned and controlled in large blocs, some expropriations had taken place, including 161 moderate-sized farms owned by American citizens, for the benefit of *ejidos*, but the majority of the rural population were still in bondage, and the mines, petroleum properties, and miscellaneous industries were still controlled by foreign capital.

Lázaro Cárdenas, an Indian of peasant origin who had grown up with the revolution, took the first all-out measures to bear down upon the foreigners and the possessing classes in Mexico. As the elected president in 1934 he was the choice of Calles, but once in office he lost little time in repudiating his master. Calles was ban-

⁹ *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1926, II, 615

ished from the country, and inroads were made ruthlessly upon the *haciendas* and even the smaller *ranchos*. In the single year 1935-36 Cárdenas allotted 6,324,266 hectares for *ejidos*, three-fourths as much as had been allotted in the period from 1915 to 1934. About one-fifth of the land so confiscated is thought to have come from foreigners, of whom Americans are believed to have lost some 632,000 hectares, or one-half of the total foreign losses. The American losses were almost wholly in the form of moderate-sized farms, all together valued at ten million dollars. No payments were proffered the owners at the time of seizure, and no protests came from Washington until 1938. Possibly the American government under Franklin D. Roosevelt, deeply immersed in its own New Deal, wished to ignore American interests in Mexico, but on March 18, 1938, President Cárdenas suddenly expropriated the entire oil industry, a move so sensational that the problem could no longer be neglected.

Accumulated bitterness toward the foreign oil companies on the part of organized labor made them the spearhead of attack for the most radical elements in the Mexican revolution. It will be recalled that the Constitution of 1917 had promised Mexican workers extremely liberal rights. Under it, moreover, the oil industry, like other foreign property, was subject to expropriation, but the agreement with the United States in 1928 had put that industry on the basis of a perpetual concession. Thus protected, the companies poured new capital into the country, extended their exploration work, and increased their production. Growing labor troubles and the radical tendencies of Cárdenas failed to discourage them; in the four months preceding the expropriation, Mexican Eagle, the largest of the concerns, put out £4,000,000 on proving new fields. Mexican Eagle was British-owned and by 1938 accounted for 60 per cent of the total annual production. The value of all the oil properties at the time of seizure was estimated at \$450,000,000, of which the American share comprised \$200,000,000; of these amounts 90 per cent represented subsoil rights, outlay on exploration work, and the actual value of reserved lands. These represented a legitimate investment and in no way constituted a padded account. But in talking compensation the Mexican government refused to admit obligation for anything in excess of the value of the surface rights on land actually under development. According to its reckoning, it owed the companies only \$40,000,000.

The case for expropriation originated in a labor quarrel, which reached the breaking point in 1937. Behind Cárdenas stood the radical secretary-general of the Confederation of Mexican Workers,

Lombardo Toledano, whose conduct showed that he intended to force a permanent breach. A government "Board of Conciliation" supported him in imposing on the companies conditions so onerous as to deprive them of their right to manage their business. To a basic wage increase of 27 per cent and numerous overtime, holiday, free-travel, free-housing, and free-clothing privileges handed over to the workers was added the requirement that even persons in managerial positions had to be members of the union. An appeal by the companies to the Mexican Supreme Court was the emptiest of forms, Cárdenas had already packed that body with his own appointees and limited their terms to six years, the same as his own. If anything further were needed to furnish an example of a complete denial of justice, it was supplied by Toledano and his gang; on the appointed day they attended court and howled down counsel for the companies. Overlooking the provisions of the law and rejecting a last-minute offer from the companies, Cárdenas then took the ultimate step. The British government peremptorily demanded a return of the properties of its nationals, but it succeeded only in underlining its own helplessness; for Mexico broke off diplomatic relations. Left to themselves by their own government, the American companies made a further effort to reach an agreement with the Mexican president; they were willing to carry on provided they were promised immunity from interference with management. This the Mexican radicals clearly showed they would not grant; by 1940 all doubt that they were determined to keep the property was dissolved.

The oil-expropriation decree finally provoked a fresh exchange of arguments between Washington and Mexico City. In principle the American restraining hand seemed firm enough. Secretary Cordell Hull held out for the rule of compensation as a general rule of international law. "The taking of property without compensation is not expropriation. It is confiscation," he asserted. "It is no less confiscation because there may be an expressed intent to pay at some time in the future." Financial inability to make redress was not a proper excuse for confiscation. Moreover, with a sidelong glance at the precarious position of American investments in other Latin-American republics, the Secretary took the Mexicans to task for expecting the United States alone to be a good neighbor. "The good-neighbor policy," he reminded them, "can only be based on mutual respect by both governments of the rights of each and of the rights of the citizens of each."^a

^a The texts of the notes formally exchanged between the two governments are reprinted in *International Conciliation Leaflet No. 345* (December 1938).

But the Mexicans were fully equal to the occasion. Making a side thrust at the forms of indirect confiscation practiced by the Roosevelt administration in its own country through the depreciation of the currency, they took their stand on the supreme "rights of society", moreover, they had little difficulty in casting doubt upon the validity of the rule of compensation as a principle of international law. Illustrations taken from the statutes of other countries indicated the contrary, and Mr. Hull was not able to cite cases to prove his argument. It is well known that fundamental social upheavals have invariably meant heavy losses for property holders in different countries, including the United States, and that under the cloak of the police power and other constitutional prerogatives, the value of property has been destroyed on different occasions in this country. In other countries, as in Mexico, the test of compensation has been, not a legal abstraction, or even a constitutional guaranty, but the question of what is feasible at the time, in terms of willingness as well as capacity to pay.

Theoretically the Hull arguments applied equally to all the American expropriated property in Mexico; but actually the Roosevelt administration exerted itself only in behalf of the small agrarian owners. Popular prejudice against large "interests" was by no means confined to Mexico, and the Roosevelt administration was scarcely less aware of matters of political expediency than Cárdenas. An attempt to extract a pledge to make no further seizures without compensation met with a flat rebuff; nevertheless to the Roosevelt administration is due the credit for obtaining actual compensation for the small owners, the first time in the history of the revolution that Mexico offered anything more than promises. Despite the impasse in legal argument, Mexico paid an installment of \$1,000,000 on May 31, 1939, toward satisfaction of the agrarian claims, she further agreed to pay similar annual installments in the future, up to a total to be determined by a commission of two experts, one from each side. Under this arrangement she had paid \$3,000,000 by 1941, in November of which year the two governments signed a General Claims Convention; a global settlement of \$40,000,000 was made in satisfaction of all claims agrarian and general (but not including the oil claims), payable in annual installments of \$2,500,000 commencing in 1942. The small owners were provided for virtually in full.

An accord concerning the American oil properties was reached between the two governments at the same time. Mexico deposited \$9,000,000 for the account of the companies, an appraisal of the

total compensation to be paid was to be made by two experts, one each appointed by the two governments, and their report, to be rendered within five months, was to be the basis for a final agreement. The oil companies were to be paid over a period of eleven years, dating from March 18, 1938, the time of seizure. The companies were under no obligation to accept the agreement, and their immediate response was a flat refusal; it is clear that they feared that the agreement was mere window-dressing preparatory to a final award on the basis of the Mexican evaluation, rather than the American. The award, published in April 1942, showed that they had not guessed wrong. The total indemnity to be paid for the American-owned oil properties was only \$23,995,991, considerably less than the value of the surface rights at the time of seizure. In accepting the award, the Roosevelt administration officially abandoned the principle of fair compensation, to which it had paid lip service. In the meantime it became evident that the properties could not be operated without at least fifteen million dollars' worth of new equipment, which had to come from the United States.

But the agreements of November 1941 went far beyond the settlement of claims. The American government became the financier of Mexico and undertook to furnish the money with which to pay for the expropriated properties. It pledged itself to support the peso to the extent of using \$40,000,000 from its stabilization fund; it agreed to resume the purchase of Mexican silver at the rate of \$18,200,000 per year; and it promised a credit of \$30,000,000 to be expended on road-building in the Republic. A further undertaking on the part of the Export-Import Bank of Washington, a government-owned institution, to consider sympathetically requests from Mexico for additional credits pointed to the conclusion that the United States was committed to the financing of the neighbor Republic on a large scale. In this manner the interminable argument over questions of legal principle was brought to a close, Mexico under President Avila Camacho was now no less a part of the American financial economy than she had been under Porfirio Díaz; but this time her future was mortgaged direct to the United States government. Provision for partial compensation to private capital had been made, but no understanding with regard to future expropriations had been reached, or perhaps even attempted.⁷

The financial agreements had hidden value in relation to the political rapprochement between the two countries. They were the

⁷ The agreements are summarized in *The Department of State Bulletin*, No. 126 (November 22, 1941), Vol. V.

price paid for drawing Mexico into the system of hemispheric solidarity constructed under United States leadership—defensive arrangements for the exchange of military information, the mutual use of air bases, and other evidences of collaboration. A bare two weeks after the signing of these agreements the United States was at war with Japan, Germany, and Italy; and Mexico now moved toward still closer co-operation. A Joint Mexican-United States Defense Commission, comparable to the Canadian-American Defense Board, was set up in January 1942. Shortly after, a strong force of the Mexican regular army, under the command of none other than ex-President Cárdenas, took stations along the coast of Lower California. American anxiety over a sudden enemy landing on that coast was thus relieved. And on June 1, 1942, Mexico formally declared war on all three of the Axis powers. Her solidarity with the United States was now complete, in striking contrast to the hostility that had prevailed between the two countries at the time of the former war between the United States and Germany.⁸

⁸ Mexico's partnership in the defense of North America is not to be overlooked. It is to be articulated with the Canadian-American alliance, described above, and with the series of understandings concluded with the South American republics, which are discussed below. In March 1943 Mexico and the United States signed a Mutual Aid Agreement, one of the many which the United States had negotiated under the Lend-Lease Act with United Nations countries since its entry into the war.

Mexican-American intimacies remained very close throughout the war, with Mexican diplomacy under the direction of Ezequiel Padilla exerting a noticeable influence on American policy in relation to the other American republics. At the Mexico City Conference of the Foreign Ministers, February 1945, Padilla played an influential role as arbiter between the United States and the pro-Argentine bloc of South American republics. See chapter 21 below (pp. 246-47).

HEMISPHERIC SECURITY

THIS CONCEPT received classic expression from the pen of James Monroe, who distinguished an "American system" from a European. But attempts to apply it were missing until the end of the nineteenth century. It was then gruffly defined in terms of an American overlordship in the Western Hemisphere, in a manner correlative to preparations being made for achieving supremacy in the Caribbean.

Hemispheric security had been given desultory expression since the time of Monroe through the Pan-American movement. But as a program of action its influence has been confined to our own times, and the techniques which have made it work are in striking contrast to the arrogant tone once employed in giving the concept definition. A common sense of peril from Europe, carefully fostered among all the American republics by diplomacy from Washington, resulted in marked progress toward institutionalizing the concept.

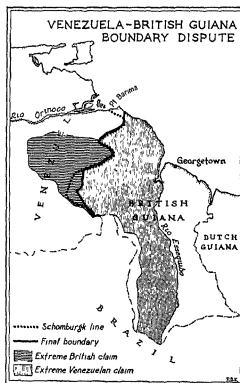
Hemispheric security has had three leading applications: (1) The Venezuela Crisis of 1895; (2) The Venezuela Debt Episode of 1902-1903; (3) The Solidarity of the Good Neighbors, 1933-1946.

CHAPTER 19

THE VENEZUELA CRISIS OF 1895

BETWEEN BRITISH GUIANA and Venezuela there lay a wide strip of uninhabited wilderness and jungle. The one attempt at scientific boundary making was performed by an English geographer in 1841, Robert Schomburgk. The Schomburgk line, as it came to be called, zigzagged away from a point on the south side of the entrance to the Orinoco River into the higher country of the interior. The British consistently advocated its adoption, but the Venezuelans stubbornly declined.

After thirty-five years, when reports of gold deposits in this no-man's land began to be rumored, the Venezuelans picked out a line to suit their own notion, one which lay far to the east of the Schomburgk line and which bisected even the settled portion of British Guiana. Henceforth the Venezuelans seemed bent on aggravating



the issue as much as possible, with one end in view—to attract the attention of the United States and to incite it to take up the cudgels for Venezuela. Not to overlook any chance of making trouble, in 1883 they even invited in some American private interests and granted them exclusive concessions in the disputed territory.

Some countermoves by the British played into the hands of Venezuela. For instance, they distorted the Schomburgk line by causing it to bulge far into Venezuelan territory. The bulge embraced additional land believed to contain gold, but the British motive appears to have been principally to scare Vene-

zuela into accepting the old Schomburgk line. Once in an effort to clinch the matter they offered to straighten the line out near the coast so as to give Venezuela the whole of the south side of the Orinoco. Such a concession had value for Venezuela, for it offered her security in the possession of this important river. When the Venezuelans continued deaf to the offer, the British abruptly proclaimed the Schomburgk line the provisional boundary. This was in 1886. Far from being dispirited, Guzman Blanco, the Venezuelan dictator, more than ever pinned his faith on the United States. He wanted territory east of the Schomburgk line, where British subjects had settled since the line had been drawn. The case could be regarded as a test of the Monroe Doctrine; the special beneficiary, however, would be Venezuela.

Guzman's entreaties began in 1876; but for nearly twenty years the results were decidedly indifferent. Appeals to sentiment in Washington failed to make a deep impression, not even when Guzman invoked the noncolonization clause of the Monroe Doctrine and charged the British with plotting to seize the Orinoco did the American government see an important interest at stake. Thomas F. Bayard, the Secretary of State in 1886, reached the point of offering the good offices of the United States to Great Britain; but even this mild step was privately ridiculed by the American minister in London, Mr. Phelps, who demanded to know how the precise position of "a line through the jungle of bushes and water" of South America could affect the United States.

The Venezuelans were nothing if not persistent. In William L. Scruggs, the representative of the Harrison administration at Caracas, who found himself out of a job when the Democrats came into power in 1894, they found the right kind of publicity agent. Scruggs issued a flaming pamphlet called *British Aggressions in Venezuela, or the Monroe Doctrine on Trial*, and saw that it reached a wide audience of Congressmen, newspaper editors, state governors, and others. The success of this pamphlet demonstrated a familiar fact: once the popular prejudice was incited, the government found difficulty in appraising foreign issues in terms of their practical connection with the United States. Venezuela was right, of course, and Great Britain was all wrong. But this was not the main point. The Monroe Doctrine was the issue. The real challenge was to the United States; to ignore it would be "such a surrender of national prestige as would make us the jest of the civilized world."¹ This was not the view of Scruggs alone; it was the national voice suddenly raised in anger and self-assertion. It was the voice of Congress, vented unanimously in a resolution urging the President to bring about an arbitration of the dispute.

To be sure, the wording of the resolution was mild enough; it was the temper back of it that spelled trouble. Few stopped to inquire into the dubious background of the Venezuelan claim, only the bulge which the British had made in the Schomburgk line impressed itself on the American mind. It helped prove the assertion sometimes made that the United States had an important stake in Venezuela's boundaries. "The practical result of England's aggressions in Venezuela is plain enough," declared Senator Lodge of Massachusetts. "They are all directed to securing the control of the Orinoco . . . and also of the rich mining district of the Yuruari

¹ *Congressional Record*, 53d Cong., 3d sess., Vol. 2, p. 1833

All that England has done has been a direct violation of the Monroe Doctrine, and she has increased and quickened her aggression[s] in proportion as the United States has appeared indifferent"² Twenty years of skepticism on the part of the government and of indifference on the part of Congress and the public were thus transformed lightning-like into a shrill cry for intervention

Scruggs, Lodge, and the Venezuelans evidently aimed to build a fire under the new Democratic administration of Grover Cleveland The eagerness with which Cleveland, a man already well known for his nonintervention in foreign affairs, took the match from their hands is not wholly explicable Cleveland had already passed through one term of office without being disturbed by the troubles of Venezuela The British had inflated the Schomburgk line during his previous administration; he was familiar with the facts at that time, yet had seen no vital issue affecting the Monroe Doctrine "In an application of the Monroe Doctrine," he had remarked to Thomas F Bayard, now in 1895 his ambassador to London, "though another country may give the *occasion*, we are, I suppose, not looking after *its* interests but *our own*"³ Cleveland was still of like mind with Bayard and his Secretary of State, Walter Q. Gresham, who fully shared Bayard's distrust of Venezuela As late as May 25, 1895, Gresham told Venezuela to reopen diplomatic negotiations with Great Britain first, if she wanted help from the United States.

The essential facts in 1895 were the same as in 1886. Nothing really had changed to make the Venezuela affair more of an interest to the United States in 1895 than previously But the temper of the American people had changed; and Cleveland, an Executive quite capable of breasting popular passion when his convictions ran otherwise, changed too His Secretary of State, Gresham, died only three days after his last note to Venezuela and the President passed completely under the influence of his Attorney-General, Richard Olney, whom he put in Gresham's place. Vexed by the long-unbroken deadlock between Britain and Venezuela, he was now ready to believe that a real American interest was at stake American public sentiment had been so aroused by December 1894 that he had felt obliged to urge arbitration on the two countries publicly in his annual message to Congress. This had brought no result, Britain was committed to the Schomburgk line as a basis for arbitration, while Venezuela was wedded to her extreme claim to Guiana soil. Be-

² Quoted by Perkins, *The Monroe Doctrine, 1867-1907*, p. 150

³ Allan Nevins, *Letters of Grover Cleveland* (Boston, 1933), p. 418.

tween them there was no meeting point, though Cleveland never seems to have grasped this fact. After he had ceased to be President and had returned to private life he wrote a book on the subject in which he entirely overlooked his previous indifference and adopted all of the prejudices and misstatements of the Scruggs pamphlet.

Had Gresham lived and remained Secretary of State, it is difficult to guess what the course of events would have been. It was the kind of a dispute which, if ignored much longer by the administration, might become uncontrollable. Popular wrath was steadily being worked up, not merely by Lodge and the Republicans but also by many Democrats. There had been a loud noise from a small explosion in Nicaragua only the year before, when the British had intervened to secure redress for the maltreatment of one of their consuls. Many American jingoes had stormed over this incident; but Cleveland had disregarded them. The President had risked his leadership, but under Olney's guidance he soon recaptured it. The results of the new Secretary's influence were startling: a challenge, which was chiefly Olney's handiwork, issued forth in July 1895, designed to shake the British government out of its time-honored complacency. Half-humorously Cleveland himself described this communication as Olney's "twenty-inch gun note."

The merits of the boundary question scarcely interested Olney, nor did he show himself particularly affected by the suggestion that its settlement one way or the other concerned a vital interest of the United States. Though he mentioned in passing the size of the British claim and showed himself biased in Venezuela's favor, Mr. Olney was not inclined to lend much credence to a theory that British possession of the territory in question was a danger to American security. None of Venezuela's proponents in fact put the emphasis there. They were one and all, the Secretary of State least excepted, bent on asserting the right of the United States to hegemony over the New World. Mr. Olney said so:

Today the United States is practically sovereign on this continent, and its fiat is law upon the subjects to which it confines its interposition. Why? It is not simply by reason of its high character as a civilized state, nor because wisdom and justice and equity are the invariable characteristics of the dealings of the United States. It is because, in addition to all other grounds, its infinite resources combined with its isolated position render it master of the situation and practically invulnerable as against any or all other powers.⁴

⁴J. B. Moore, *Digest of International Law*, VI, 553

Britain was thus read a lecture on the self-assumed right of the United States to interpose in anything it chose on this side of the water. The Monroe Doctrine was public law, so Olney asserted, and it was the will of the United States that Great Britain submit to arbitration the whole territory in question, not merely the portion which comprised the extension of the Schomburgk line. This was probably the only way in which the deadlock could be resolved; if the arbitration could be put on a sound and reasonable basis, and not decided according to the caprice of Venezuela, there was nothing difficult about the issue. The adoption of a rule that long previous occupation by the subjects of either power would determine ownership over the disputed territory, for instance, would make arbitration easy and fair. Such a rule was good international law and, furthermore, it fitted the facts in the disputed territory. It proved the ultimate escape. But Lecturer Olney failed to suggest it.

The British were late in responding. Lord Salisbury was both Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary, and the year 1895 was a busy one for the British Foreign Office. It was intended to get the reply in Cleveland's hands in time for his annual report to Congress; but someone miscalculated the dates and the dispatch did not reach the White House until December 6. Salisbury was scarcely second to Olney in his ability to exasperate. He too was hardly interested in the immediate issue; his was a return lecture on the Monroe Doctrine. The British Foreign Secretary could see nothing "unnatural and inexpedient" (Olney's expression) in a permanent connection between a New World state and an Old; there was certainly nothing of that sort between Britain and Canada, or between her and her West Indian colonies, as he asserted. He could agree "that any disturbance of the existing territorial distribution" in the Western Hemisphere "by any fresh acquisitions on the part of any European State would be a highly inexpedient change"; but he could not admit that the United States could concern itself with every frontier dispute that occurred in that hemisphere.

Olney and Lord Salisbury were arguing in circles; neither had any definite solution for the boundary impasse, both were heated over questions of national prestige and honor. The British Foreign Secretary's tone enraged President Cleveland. Though warned against the pitfalls of jumping at conclusions, the President resolved to make an answer publicly in kind. He and his Secretary of State drafted a special message to Congress. To Lord Salisbury's denials of the legal validity of the Monroe Doctrine he gave a dogmatic rebuttal, adding nothing to the argument Salisbury had said. "The

Government of the United States is not entitled to affirm as a universal proposition, with reference to a number of independent states for whose conduct it assumes no responsibility, that its interests are necessarily concerned in whatever may befall those States simply because they are situated in the Western Hemisphere." Cleveland responded by affirming that the Monroe Doctrine had "its place in the code of international law as certainly and as securely as if it were specifically mentioned. . . . The Monroe doctrine finds its recognition in those principles of international law which are based upon the theory that every nation shall have its rights protected and its just claims enforced."

Reduced to its simplest meaning, Cleveland's message demanded that the British government recognize the right of the United States to interpose its hand in any affair of the Western Hemisphere. He identified the Monroe Doctrine with justice to small nations, but the United States was to be the judge. Unlike Olney, Cleveland failed to make even a pretense that Venezuela's boundary troubles concerned the security of the United States. Britain had refused arbitration; Cleveland was determined to have it at any cost, and the United States would be the arbiter. The President left but one loophole: he proposed an investigating commission to be named by himself and to make a report on the disputed boundary. He wrote:

When such report is made *and accepted* it will in my opinion be the duty of the United States to resist by every means in its power as a willful aggression upon its rights and interests the appropriation by Great Britain of any lands or the exercise of governmental jurisdiction over any territory which after investigation we have determined of right belongs to Venezuela.⁵

The whole tone of the message was one of prejudice. To the man in the street the President seemed to say that Britain had no rights. It was as neat a case of tail-twisting as an American Executive had ever indulged in. Congress responded uproariously, the floodgates of Anglophobia opened, and the President found himself huzzed the nation over by elements some of which were normally his bitter enemies. It was a field day for Irish-Americans, Free Silverites, high-tariff Republicans, and Manifest Destiny men generally—an unholy alliance if ever there was one. Like a flash, the occasion revealed what irrational forms the widespread hatred of

⁵ The extracts are from the documents, printed in Moore, *op cit.*, pp 533-83. Italics inserted.

England could assume. Free-silver men alleged they would welcome a war because it would liberate them from the English "money power", high priests of the protective tariff lashed away at the imaginary hoide of "British gold" being funneled into the country to buy up opposition to protection, while expansionist Republicans like Lodge of Massachusetts, Cullom of Illinois, and Theodore Roosevelt applauded Cleveland's robust manifesto on the Monroe Doctrine

Cleveland's one avenue of escape rested on the fact that he had not really delivered a prejudgment. His method was that of a man of temper, certain rigid standards of right were his master, since these led him into a passionate enunciation of the Monroe Doctrine, they won for him at least the temporary admiration of expansionists and others whose notions were ordinarily abhorrent to him. But the Executive meant that there should be a genuine investigation and not a mere formal whitewashing of Venezuela, to be followed by a desperate war in her defense. "We do not say either that Great Britain's boundary claim is false, nor that the enlargement of her claims toward the centre of Venezuela . . . is unjustifiable beyond a doubt. . .," he wrote Ambassador Bayard two weeks after releasing his bombshell.⁶

Bayard had been warning the President meanwhile against putting faith in the Venezuelans, he knew their pettifoggery from his experience as Secretary of State. Other more self-restrained and keener-minded men than Cleveland and Olney had been trying to put on the brakes. Jacob Gould Schurman in the *New York Tribune* chafed because Olney had been so dense as to overlook the substantial recognition Lord Salisbury had given the Monroe Doctrine in spite of his lofty tone. Had not the British Foreign Secretary said that any disturbance in the existing territorial distribution in the Western Hemisphere at the hands of a European nation would be "a highly inexpedient change"?

Most critical of all was the voice of John Bassett Moore, the distinguished authority on international law. Like Bayard, Moore remembered what Olney and Cleveland had forgotten—the obvious dishonesty of the Venezuelan claim. Practically all South American boundaries, he pointed out, had been settled according to the rule of actual possession. "Claim what you will," Moore paraphrased Cleveland as saying to Venezuela, "and propose arbitration of it, and I will step in and say that it shall be settled in no other way. I know

⁶ Nevins, *Letters of Grover Cleveland*, p. 417

nothing of the merits of the controversy. I am simply backing you. This is according to the Monroe Doctrine."⁷

Influences such as these, though they failed to prevent the original outburst, soon prevailed. Once they had uncorked their indignation, the President and Olney became more objective too. Meanwhile the British held their temper. Salisbury, who had originally been startled at Olney's eagerness to make so much out of so little, thought the excitement on this side would "fizzle away." The leader of the Liberal Opposition, Sir William Harcourt, was all for throwing up the sponge at once; but the more level-headed British public men decided to play for time. These were their reactions in December. Early the next month Britain was jolted by a veiled threat from Germany; the Kaiser sent a public telegram to President Kruger of the South African Republic gratuitously supporting that worthy in his quarrels with Cecil Rhodes and the British government. The foam of British temper rose against Germany; it seems never to have started to work against the United States.⁸

Time played out the Venezuela dispute. The United States scored on its demand for recognition of its right to interpose, the British government got the satisfaction of a dispassionate boundary award. The energetic Joseph Chamberlain, the British Colonial Secretary, availed himself of a visit to his wife's relatives in New Hampshire to talk with Olney. Between them they agreed that fifty years of actual occupation was a reasonable test of the validity of the British title to the disputed territory. Meanwhile the President's investigating commission had been at work. It was an eminent and dignified body of five, including two Supreme Court justices. It asked for and received the co-operation of the British government, which supplied the maps. Venezuela was tacitly ignored. The finishing touches were made by a treaty signed in February 1897, setting up an arbitral tribunal of five jurists, two British, two Americans, and a fifth to be named president by the four. The choice was one of the most distinguished men of his generation, the Russian jurist, G. F. de Martens. Two years later the tribunal awarded a boundary almost identical with the Schomburgk line. Furthermore, the award coincided with the one-time British offer to Venezuela to take Point Barima and the southern bank of the Orinoco. This offer was proof

⁷ Quoted by A. L. P. Dennis, *Adventures in American Diplomacy, 1896-1906* (New York, 1928), p. 34.

⁸ The dates at this point should be noted carefully. It is frequently but erroneously alleged that the quarrel with Germany affected the British decision in the Venezuela matter.

that the British had no designs on the strategic control of that river, as Senator Lodge and others had noisily asserted. Meanwhile, the public in both the United States and Great Britain had long since forgotten the affair.

Olney fired the decisive gun on July 20, 1895, proclaiming the natural right of the United States to the hegemony of the Western Hemisphere. He inflated the Monroe Doctrine as few American statesmen have done. His was an assertion of hemispheric leadership of an extraordinarily bellicose character. He emphasized a positive Monroe Doctrine, a right to lead and to dominate. The incident chosen from which to trumpet the broad claims of the United States was of trifling importance, and probably therefore a blessing in disguise. It was very dubious proof of the quality of American statesmanship under Cleveland and Olney, justifiable, if at all, because it stole the thunder of the American jingoes; nevertheless the insignificance of the issue made the necessary readjustment in British thinking on matters American an easy one. Britain henceforth showed the United States deference when her rights in this hemisphere were involved. The transfer of leadership over the nations of the Western Hemisphere took place definitely in 1896.

CHAPTER 20

THE VENEZUELA DEBT EPISODE OF 1902-1903

THE REPUBLIC of Venezuela in 1901 reached a crossroads in its relations with foreign powers. Bad debts accumulated from past revolutions, plunder and damage to property of citizens of some eleven European and North American nations including the United States, defaulted interest on railway and other public-utility investments of foreigners under Venezuelan government guaranty naturally caused trouble. A mean dictator named Castro, who had seized power two years previously, gauged his success with the natives in terms of insults that he leveled at the representatives of foreign governments in Caracas. Principally Germans and English were involved, but Americans were no less out of patience. "An unspeakably villainous little monkey," was Theodore Roosevelt's private

characterization of Castro, while the American minister at Caracas went so far as to assure his German colleague that the Monroe Doctrine was not meant "to serve as protection for rascals"

This was in fact the truth. Roosevelt himself announced in his annual message of 1901 to Congress: "We do not guarantee any state against punishment if it misconducts itself, provided that punishment does not take the form of the acquisition of territory by any non-American power."¹ The international significance of the issue hinges on this point. would a debt-collecting expedition inevitably lead to occupation and political control—temporary or permanent—of Venezuelan ports? Determined to make Castro toe the mark, the Germans foresaw this possibility and warned the State Department that such might happen. They may or may not have been hoping to turn the affair into a political adventure. Of that we cannot be certain. But officials in the American Navy Department took it for granted that they would do so, if they could. Previous German actions in the Caribbean had already aroused suspicion; and now that the United States was getting ready to build the Panama Canal, the Navy was bent on taking unusual precautions. Venezuela's fraud might justify reprisal, but not to the extent of risking her becoming a pawn of a European great power.

The Germans made haste slowly, however; eager to extract every advantage from the goodwill tour on which he sent his brother, Prince Henry, to the United States, the Kaiser deferred the proposed reprisals against Venezuela for an entire year. In the meantime the British government, having felt the pulse of Washington in much the same way as the Germans, seized the bull by the horns. A joint blockade of the Venezuelan ports by British and German gunboats was its view of the surest way to bring Castro to time. The Venezuelan dictatorship, like others in Latin America, fed upon the fruits of the customs offices; with his ports idle, Castro would be left without choice, and a landing of troops on Venezuelan soil would become unnecessary.

Actually the Anglo-German intervention, which lasted from December 1902 to the middle of February 1903, did not quite follow this outline, though the results obtained were mainly as desired; and at no time was there an occupation of Venezuelan soil. The British and German squadrons first overpowered the Venezuelan gunboats, a step which brought an immediate appeal from Castro to arbitrate

¹ Richardson, IX, 6663. Roosevelt's distinction was consistent with precedent. Recall the somewhat similar situation in Mexico in 1861 and the like stand taken by the United States toward a European intervention then.

the claims. The United States transmitted the appeal but did not endorse it; within six days London and Berlin gave their consent in principle. Perhaps skeptical of Castro's good faith, however, they did not relieve the pressure on Venezuela; a full blockade of the ports was instituted on December 20, *after* the arbitration appeal had been accepted, and was continued for nearly two months. It was not clear what was to be arbitrated. The financial claims of the various powers were awarded by a mixed-claims commission in 1903. The only question which was submitted to the Hague Court of Arbitration was the question who should receive priority in payments, and that body decided in favor of the powers that had used force.

Meanwhile the American Navy had proceeded to make itself ready for emergency action. The occasion offered a splendid opportunity for testing out plans for defending the Caribbean anyway, and the rascally Castro was apparently not expected to fly the flag of truce so speedily. So far as the American admirals were concerned, the whole German action was under a cloud, and Roosevelt and his Secretary of State certainly lent them an ear. A memorandum by Rear-Admiral Taylor, chief of the Bureau of Navigation, prophesied the course of events as follows: Germany would find herself obliged to make war on Venezuela, if she was to get redress, after she had won she would have to occupy Venezuelan soil or otherwise convert the country to vassalage if she was to collect on her claims. Consequently the United States should take the pains to muster a force at Puerto Rico equal or superior to that of Germany. Possibly Admiral Taylor vividly remembered the advantage the German government had taken of the Chinese five years before, when it had exploited a trifling private wrong by seizing a port and wringing from them vital concessions in one of the richest of the Chinese provinces. Venezuela was as helpless as China.

Actually the American naval forces began to gather in the vicinity of Puerto Rico long before even this memorandum had been penned. A fascinating war game began on November 29, 1902, between two American squadrons operating between Puerto Rico and the South American coast. On December 8, one day after the Germans and the British had sent their ultimatum to Castro, Admiral Dewey took command. His presence made the fleet's action the more pointed. And when the war games were over, a well-armed American force nevertheless remained on watch in the Caribbean until the German and British ships had left. The Navy, however, took quite a different line toward the British than toward the Germans. The British part was comparable to the role they had played in Mexico

in 1862; but like the Emperor Napoleon, the Germans were very probably tempted with ulterior hopes.² Meanwhile the Anglo-German blockade continued; the Germans even sank a gunboat or two³ and fired on a ramshackle Venezuelan fort. They evidently wanted to make sure that the Venezuelans understood that the arbitration and claims settlement would have to be real, not merely nominal.⁴

Sparks flew from the jingo press in the United States over these exploits: the Monroe Doctrine was being insulted. But Roosevelt and Hay kept to a middle ground. They were, of course, determined that Germany should not establish herself in Venezuela. But on the other hand they wasted no sympathy on the Venezuelans. They were unready to deny a European state the right to enforce a debt claim against a Latin-American state, and they seem to have been confident that the Anglo-German blockade would not go beyond this point. An effort made by Señor Drago, the foreign minister of Argentina, to win support for his thesis that force should not be used by one government against another for the collection of debts fell on deaf ears in Washington. On the other hand, the British took advantage of popular disapproval of the intervention in the United States by posing the question whether the United States should not itself assume responsibility for the good behavior of the Latin-American republics. This would be the most obvious method of avoiding the risks of European intervention in the New World.

The question thus raised publicly in Britain—it was never put in the form of an official inquiry by the British government—was not one which required an immediate answer. Venezuela debt worries vanished from the scene in 1903, and whatever political adventures the Germans had hoped to have in that country they wisely de-

² See chapter 8, p. 120.

³ Seward W. Livermore, "Theodore Roosevelt, the American Navy, and the Venezuelan Crisis of 1902-1903," *American Historical Review*, LI (1946), 452-71, written from naval records, contains an exhaustive analysis of the Navy Department's suspicions and actions. I am furthermore greatly indebted to Dr. Livermore for suggestions on rewriting this chapter.

Years after the event Colonel Roosevelt drew a graphic picture of himself summoning the German Ambassador to the White House on December 10, 1902, and demanding that the Germans submit their case to arbitration. Historians have been disposed to poke fun at the story. Literally it may not have been true, nevertheless, as Dr. Livermore shows, it could have been substantially true. The mobilization of American naval strength in the Caribbean was done for a purpose, and the Germans were not left in doubt as to what the purpose was. They signified their acceptance of arbitration, moreover, on December 19, one day after orders had been issued from Washington to Dewey to send a squadron to Trinidad. This is certainly a remarkable correlation of dates.

cided not to begin. The American naval mobilization undoubtedly had its desired effect, but it did not interfere with the joint British-German reprisal against Venezuela. Roosevelt had no intention of pushing the issue that far.

The episode had this effect, however: fear of Germany henceforth became a factor of consequence in the Latin-American policy of the United States. This was especially true of the Navy, ever on the alert to the dangers of German concession-hunting in the Caribbean. The American government, moreover, was forced to ponder the question posed in the British press: Should the United States assume the position of paramountcy in the Western Hemisphere in fact, a position it had declared its right to in 1895? European armed interventions for redress of financial or other grievances entailed risks; yet the risks must be run unless the United States was prepared with a satisfactory substitute. When two years later a similar issue did arise nearer home, in the case of the Dominican Republic, the United States answered the question decisively in the affirmative. It intervened itself with overwhelming force in Santo Domingo and obliged that state to toe the mark in its foreign obligations. It thus snatched from the European powers any pretext for safeguarding their own interests in the Western Hemisphere.

CHAPTER 21

THE SOLIDARITY OF THE GOOD NEIGHBORS, 1933-1946

THE SECURITY of the Western Hemisphere rests on three closely related factors: (1) The first is the traditional use of sea power by Great Britain as a bulwark against aggression from the European continent. This is the oldest and the best-established instrument of protection in the West. Its power stems from the Napoleonic wars, notably from Nelson's victory in 1805 at Trafalgar, which made England queen of the Atlantic for more than a hundred years. So firm was Britain's supremacy on the seas in the nineteenth century that it must be acknowledged as the indispensable factor in the historic defense of the Americas. (2) Next is the Monroe Doctrine. The theory of James Monroe in 1823 was that the United

States alone defines the conditions of hemispheric security and assumes responsibility for enforcing them. The theory became an American tradition long before it could be practiced. It took no account of British sea power, nor of the relative impotence of the United States in the nineteenth century, nor of the facts of geography. The vast length of the South American coastline, its lack of natural protection against attack from the open sea, and the great distance of the principal ports from North American centers have always been simple problems in geography. They have none the less been ignored in the face of an overwhelming aspiration for hemispheric leadership. The fact that Buenos Aires and Rio de Janeiro, Valparaiso, and Lima were almost twice the distance from New York and Philadelphia than they were from European seaports made no more impression than did the lack of a navy indispensable if the policy were ever to be implemented.

It was Captain Mahan who at the very close of the nineteenth century first called attention to this amazing discrepancy between facts and theory. Without sea power the Monroe Doctrine was impossible of fulfillment, if a foreign power once resolved upon aggression. And sea power, as Mahan pointed out, required the control of strategic bases for operating a fleet. In these the South American coasts were almost completely lacking. Fortunate indeed for the tradition of the Monroe Doctrine that there was no actual challenge to the safety of South America!¹

Such relatively minor incidents as occurred in the nineteenth century were safely ignored by the United States. The one important attempt on the Western Hemisphere was the French military occupation of Mexico in 1862. It was accomplished when the United States was distracted. Without collaborating with the French, the British nevertheless violated the precedent set by themselves in 1823 by standing aside. At the close of the American Civil War the French withdrew from Mexico, and the tradition was quickly accepted in the United States that the Monroe Doctrine had been vindicated. The contingent circumstances of the French disasters in

¹ Naval armament began to be a recognized factor in South American affairs early in the twentieth century, and arose from competition among Argentina, Brazil, and Chile. Recognizing the possible effects of the construction of South American navies on the Monroe Doctrine and American claims to hegemony, Theodore Roosevelt vainly tried to discourage Brazil from enlarging her navy. The Taft administration reversed this policy by endeavoring, with mixed success, to steer South American orders for battleships to American shipyards. Germany and Britain, however, were strong competitors. See the illuminating article by Seward W. Livermore, "Battleship Diplomacy in South America; 1905-1925," *Journal of Modern History*, XVI (1944), 31-48.

Mexico and of the international complications facing the French emperor in Europe escaped notice. The myth of a diplomatic triumph for the Monroe Doctrine was too easily believed, except by the American statesman who was the most active in applying it. William H. Seward, the Secretary of State, learned the lessons of sea power with respect to the French adventure, but his countrymen did not. The French retirement was too easy really to test the power of the United States. Seward was eager to profit from the experience by gaining naval bases in the Caribbean from which to operate against unfriendly fleets in the future, but his contemporaries in the Senate refused to see the point. This failure to correlate sea power with the Monroe Doctrine is a historical defect in American thinking never thoroughly overcome even to this day. The fiasco of the French expedition was only a doubtful test of the Monroe Doctrine with respect to a country in the immediate neighborhood of the United States, with respect to a possible invasion of South America it was no test at all.

The third factor in hemispheric security, and the one possessing the least historical reality, is Pan-Americanism—the ideal of a permanent association and understanding among the twenty-one republics on the basis of common political ideals and systems of government. A myth which was common in the nineteenth century, no serious effort was made to test its workability until the era of Franklin D. Roosevelt. It was a concept native with James Monroe that the republics of the Western Hemisphere formed a natural bloc opposing the monarchies of the Old World. Monroe was deceived by the appearances of similarity between the American Revolution and the upheavals in Hispanic America, of which he was a contemporary. He built upon the doctrine of the two spheres, a seventeenth-century concept that reflected the emotions of the early colonists in escaping to what they thought was a separate world.

Again geography and the contrasting historical backgrounds between Latin America and English North America were ignored. The magic term "republic" captivated the American imagination, and it was believed that the New World had its own unique political system in contrast to the monarchies of the Old. The aristocratic attributes of Latin-American revolutions and the characteristic of personal dictatorship that distinguished the countries south of the Rio Grande were perhaps not wholly unknown in the United States; nevertheless, little effort was made to appraise them in terms of a real rapprochement among the countries of the two continents.

As a matter of fact, the contacts between the United States and

the countries to the south were of the slightest during the century following Monroe. The ties of Latin America remained naturally European, and the astounding progress of the Colossus of the North aroused fear rather than confidence. On its part this country made few gestures in their direction until the time of James G. Blaine. A formal Pan-American conference held in Washington in 1889 was the first test of friendship, and the results were not promising. Political discussions turned on the question of preserving peace by arbitration among the American republics; Blaine showed an avid interest in South American markets, but experience showed the lack of realism that distinguished the work of the conference. Three subsequent Pan-American conferences, held between 1901 and 1910, were scarcely more fruitful.

Needless to say, attempts at correlation between the concepts of Pan-Americanism and the Monroe Doctrine were almost totally lacking. There was no cause for political collaboration among the countries of the New World against those of the Old. Some Latin-American republics, it is true, played upon the jealousies of the United States in order to enlist its aid in quarrels with Great Britain. Venezuela's success in this respect in 1895 became a classic. But this was hardly an advancement of the idea of a mutual stake in the security of the Western Hemisphere. On the contrary, the Venezuela issue strengthened the North American conception of the United States as the sole protector of the two continents.

A hint that Pan-Americanism might be turned to account for the mutual defense of the hemisphere was first voiced in 1914. The Wilson administration advocated a security pact among the United States and the A B C powers of South America, Argentina, Brazil, and Chile. The parties were to guarantee one another's territorial integrity and independence. Chile killed the negotiation, but there is little to indicate more than an academic interest in the project on the part of the American government. Wilson, a stiff believer in the Monroe Doctrine, had no intention of building up a common front in the Western Hemisphere during the War of 1914-1918. He bluntly rejected overtures for inter-American co-operation preserving neutrality, and, though he issued a rhetorical summons to all the neutrals to break with Germany, once the United States had entered the war, he turned his back on Pan-Americanism entirely. The Caribbean and Central American republics, except Salvador, were forced into the war in aid of American national security: four of them were at the time occupied by the armed forces of the United States, and the rest were indirectly subject to American influence.

Mexico nursed a bitter grievance; and, though part of South America joined nominally in the war, Argentina, Chile, Venezuela, and Colombia remained either indifferent or pro-German. Disunity in the ranks of the American republics was probably never greater than during the period of the first World War, nor was enmity toward the United States ever less concealed. It broke forth in angry expostulation shortly after the war was over, and Latin America looked upon the newly formed League of Nations partly as an offset to the overweening power of the United States. As if to deny the assumption, often voiced by Americans, that Latin America should bring its disputes to the United States for arbitration, several of the southern republics took their differences directly to the League. When Panama attempted to lean on the League for support in 1921, however, she found herself thwarted by American diplomacy. Where a state so near to being a dependency of the United States as Panama was involved, Washington refused the League any opportunity to act as peacemaker.

Beyond a doubt this tendency to practice a benevolent despotism in the Western Hemisphere had become the principal bar to an inter-American rapprochement. American imperialism had ripened since 1895, when Richard Olney picked a quarrel with Britain over Venezuela's boundary. Olney claimed sovereignty for the United States over both continents. He spoke in the figurative sense only; nevertheless, the American behavior from that time forward reflected a consciousness of power and a determination to assume guardianship over the weaker neighbors to the south. Ten years later this took the form of intervention in the affairs of the petty republics of the Caribbean, where with few exceptions chaos and misrule prevailed. The incentive for such interference was furnished in part by fears for American self-interest—a conviction that the United States must either act or submit to European supervision of the republics.

Misgivings concerning the financial bondage of Caribbean states to Europe led to the exaggerated fears on which "dollar diplomacy" rested; the intention was to force all Latin-American countries to do their banking in the United States. Taft and Knox, Wilson, Bryan, and Lansing shared these misgivings and in so far as practicable acted in conformity with that intention. Central America was particularly in their minds because of its relation to the Panama Canal; but they looked forward to the time when they could sweep in all of South America. Under Wilson the inclination was to exercise more than financial oversight. There was a feeling that the Monroe Doctrine ought to be restated and brought up to date. "Should [not]

a new doctrine be formulated," asked Robert Lansing, the counselor to the State Department, soon to become Secretary of State,

declaring that the United States is opposed to the extension of European control over American territory and institutions through financial as well as other means, and having for its object, not only the national safety and interests of this country, *but also the establishment and maintenance of republican constitutional government in all American states*, the free exercise by their people of their public and private rights, the administration of impartial justice, and the prevention of political authority from becoming the tool of personal ambition and greed. . . .²

And while Wilson uttered his abhorrence of territorial aggressions, he unconsciously showed his zeal for this other brand of imperialism, the insistence that the Latin-American nations have good government patterned after that of the United States "We intend to teach the Latin American countries to have good rulers," he exclaimed impatiently. And actions spoke louder than words when he rigorously prescribed his medicine for the maladies of Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Nicaragua, and even Mexico. Wilson's predecessors had handled intervention cases gingerly; Roosevelt, for example, was well aware of the distinction between financial supervision and prescription for constitutional government. Public opinion in his own country barked at him, and he had to go slowly. Not so Wilson, who acted more severely but suffered far less criticism in proportion. The fascination of war overseas and the impulses of a militant crusade for democracy which characterized his hold on the American people probably account for the inconsistency.

At any rate there were definite limits to benevolent despotism in the Western Hemisphere which the United States began to discover once the World War was over. Geography was one. Without overwhelming sea power it was out of the question to order the affairs of the countries beyond the Caribbean basin. The impunity with which the states of South America appealed to the League and the boldness of their protests against the intervention policy in the Caribbean were demonstrations of that. It began to be clear that interventionism might cost the United States what influence it had, unless it altered its course. Furthermore, the first World War had modified the conditions of security in the Caribbean. There was no longer a practical question of the indebtedness of the weak states to Europe. The United States was mistress of the situation politically and finan-

² Quoted from a memorandum written by Lansing, June 11, 1914, on the "Present Nature and Extent of the Monroe Doctrine, and Its Need for Restatement," *The Lansing Papers*, II, 464. Italics are inserted.

cially, and the problem was to pay off past debts, not to prevent new ones from being incurred. Dollar diplomacy was hardly necessary.

Moreover, there was far less confidence in the possibilities of imposing democratic government on the Caribbean republics than Wilson had ever admitted. One had only to look at the dubious results and the easy recurrence of fraudulent elections, except in places where American military supervision was direct, to question the wisdom of such a policy. Good government in the Caribbean was utopian unless it was continuously supervised from Washington. But paternalism, practiced on a scale comparable to that of the British in Egypt, for instance, was impossible; public opinion in the United States was not equal to it. Outcries against intervention, silenced temporarily during the first World War, broke out again with redoubled vigor during the 1920's; and the Republican administrations found themselves continually on the defensive both at home and in Latin America. Little by little the United States loosened its hold on the Caribbean states and overcame its reluctance to deal with the peculiar type of dictatorship to which they readily turned whenever given the chance. By 1933 American military occupation had ceased; a mild form of financial supervision continued in the Dominican Republic and Haiti seven years longer; but dictator presidents again reigned throughout the region. Successful co-operation with petty dictators proved to be an essential feature in the reorganization of American policy on this side of the Atlantic.

Coincident with this gradual liquidation of American intervention went efforts to dissociate the Monroe Doctrine from charges that it formed a cloak for imperialism. "I utterly disclaim, as unwarranted," asserted Secretary Hughes in 1923, "the observations . . . occasionally . . . made implying a claim on our part to superintend the affairs of our sister republics, to assert an overlordship, to consider the spread of our authority beyond our own domain as the aim of our policy, and to make our power the test of right in this hemisphere . . ."⁸ Hughes did not thereby renounce intervention; like the Monroe Doctrine, it continued to rest on the principle of self-preservation as against Europe. An official memorandum set forth publicly by the State Department in 1930 took the same attitude: that the Monroe Doctrine was one policy of national security, interventionism another. Since they both added up to the same sum, this looked like a play upon words. The United States was willing to divorce interventionism from the Monroe Doctrine,

⁸ Quoted by Dexter Perkins, *Hands Off: A History of the Monroe Doctrine* (Boston, 1941), p. 333.

but was loath to renounce a right which it might feel obliged to employ again. The immediate outbreak of rebellion in Nicaragua in 1926, when the Marines were tentatively withdrawn from that country, pointed a moral in this direction. What if the Caribbean states should sink into chaos?

Nevertheless, the chance had to be taken. Pressure on the United States had been continuous since the World War. There were two Pan-American conferences during the '20's, at both of which the Caribbean republics had tried to air their grievances. American influence had defeated these attempts at open discussion, insisting that the problem was one for the United States alone. Forced silence on so urgent a matter, however, was hardly calculated to inspire South American confidence. The southern republics believed they had now more to fear from the "Colossus of the North" than ever before in their history. Fifteen of them were in debt to American banks and investors to the extent of \$1,564,000,000, a result of the feverish speculation of the postwar decade. Unless interventionism could be checked in the Caribbean, it might undermine the security of South America. Even Brazil, the traditional friend of the United States, was restless; protests came to Washington direct, and in spite of the repression that seems to have prevailed at the Pan-American conferences, Latin America could obtain a hearing at least in the Assembly of the League of Nations.

Considerations such as these forced the United States into a choice. Intervention was anything but popular at home, as we have seen. It was clear that no American government would be permitted to stay in the Caribbean states indefinitely. Accordingly, Secretary Stimson used Nicaragua as an experiment to see whether or not a Central American republic could put its own house in order—he withdrew the Marines even in the face of a threatening situation. This time the Nicaraguans had reasonable success by themselves. Withdrawals followed from Cuba and Haiti, and by December 1933, when the Seventh Pan-American Conference opened at Montevideo, there was only a skeleton force in the latter republic. Even this was withdrawn in the month following.

A legend of one hundred years' standing, Pan-Americanism got its first real initiation at Montevideo. The crucial question was whether or not the United States would allow free discussion of its intervention policies. Would it stand on a point of national pride, or would it make a real gesture in the direction of hemispheric solidarity? Mr. Cordell Hull, the new Secretary of State, at first hesitated. Pleas from Latin America to let the question be ventilated,

however, finally brought a magnanimous acquiescence from the American delegation; a conference report on the rights and duties of states declared, among other things, that "No State has the right to intervene in the internal or external affairs of another"; and the report was made into a convention to which the United States became a party. Three years later, at the Buenos Aires conference, a protocol was adopted making the prohibition even stronger. It stipulated:

The High Contracting Parties declare inadmissible the intervention of any one of them, directly or indirectly, and for whatever reason, in the internal or external affairs of any other of the Parties.

The violation of the provisions of this Article shall give rise to mutual consultation, with the object of exchanging views and seeking methods of peaceful adjustment.⁴

In other words, if the United States should violate its covenant and intervene alone in the affairs of another republic, the twenty Latin-American states now held a legal right to combine against it. This did not mean, however, that the American government was oblivious to a problem that might at some future time demand attention. Questions of order within a given state might well involve the security of its neighbors. Domestic order was the first duty of each state, declared President Roosevelt at the close of the conference. But should a state fail in this duty and the resulting disorder become a menace to other states, then it was "the joint concern of a whole continent in which we are neighbors."⁵ Clearly this statement had possibilities. It suggested that intervention might take place after mutual consultation, a procedure that was approved three years later by the Buenos Aires Conference. Much depended in the future, as events were to show, on the success of American leadership in building a real solidarity among the twenty-one republics.

A case arose in the Republic of Panama in October 1941 which put this policy of nonintervention to the test. With this republic, as with Cuba, the United States had made specific commitments against intervention in its internal affairs, in accordance with the Montevideo convention. Yet in no country in the Western Hemisphere was it probably more necessary to have a regime friendly to the United States, especially should an international crisis develop. One of the steps taken by the American government the year before, pursuant to its policy of aiding Britain in the war with Germany, was to have

⁴ *Report of the Delegation of the United States of America to the Inter-American Conference for the Maintenance of Peace, Buenos Aires, Argentina* (Washington, D. C., 1937), pp. 127-28.

⁵ *The United States in World Affairs, 1933*, p. 201.

about 125 ships in the American merchant marine transferred to Panamanian registry. The ships were thus freed from the shackles of the American neutrality law and permitted to ply the trade lanes to England. Two such ships having been sunk by German submarines, it was then proposed to put guns on board the rest. At this point, however, the president of Panama, Arnulfo Arias, intervened and forbade the arming to take place. Arias was said to be pro-German in his attitude, and since becoming president a year before he had attempted the role of dictator. The announcement of his decision concerning the ships was made on October 6. The next morning he left in disguise to keep a "dental appointment" in Havana, but perhaps to meet with Nazi agents who were known to frequent that city. His opponents in Panama immediately took advantage of Arias' failure to leave a temporary successor at his post; under the leadership of the vice-president, they deposed Arias and his cabinet, arrested certain officials, and elected a new president, the former minister of justice. When Arias returned a few days later, he was placed in jail and later exiled to Nicaragua. Needless to say, the decree against the arming of the ships was immediately rescinded.

The coup d'état occupied but three days and was bloodless. The new president affirmed that it had been exclusively an internal matter, not "engineered by any foreign government." He was followed by an emphatic statement from Washington declaring categorically that the United States "has had no connection, direct or indirect, with the recent governmental changes" in Panama. The evidence appears to be conclusive that the overturn was the result of a domestic combination of elements in the Republic friendly to the United States. It nonetheless demonstrates how important it is from Washington's point of view to have regimes in Central America ready to co-operate with it in time of international stress.⁹

To return to the main question: The Montevideo Conference showed that the Roosevelt administration was determined to make a reality out of Pan-Americanism, to advance it, instead of the Monroe Doctrine, as the chief instrument of hemispheric security in the future. It was a leap in the dark, for no one could estimate in advance how successful American diplomacy would be in winning and keeping the co-operation of twenty different Latin-American

⁹ The account of this incident is taken from the reports in the *New York Times*, October 7, 10, and 17, 1941. The "Panamanian" ships of course were of American ownership and used United States ports, not Panamanian. See the study on the Second World War below.

republics. The United States was now simply *primus inter pares*; it had no more rights in the Western Hemisphere than the smallest republic; but, as the only great power in the hemisphere, its leadership was an absolute necessity. At Montevideo American diplomacy took the risk; because it plainly desired Latin-American goodwill, it bid the price demanded. The experience with intervention in the Caribbean had shown that Latin-American co-operation would not be forthcoming under the policy of the policeman. Continued intervention might in fact have the reverse effect: it could incite the southern republics to intrigue with European powers. Since the beginning of the century the position of the United States had been so secure that it could afford to ignore the attitude of the Latin Americans. There had never yet been a question of invoking their aid. But in 1933 the Roosevelt administration began realistically to forecast the future and to appraise the practical need for Latin-American collaboration in the face of possible foreign dangers. Adolf Hitler had risen to power in Germany in January, eleven months before the Montevideo Conference; and in the White House there were already reports from trusted American observers concerning the psychopathic character of Nazi Germany.

Before three years had passed, the administration had definitely correlated the European danger with the problems of the Western Hemisphere. Hitler had repudiated the peace structure of Europe and had re-occupied the Rhineland, and the United States was now resolved to build a united front among the American republics. Mr. Roosevelt called the conference at Buenos Aires and opened it in person, December 1, 1936. His allusions to the European scene were unmistakable: constitutional government must be sustained, he declared, and a solid front built up in order that "others who . . . might seek to commit acts of aggression against us, will find a hemisphere wholly prepared to consult together for our mutual safety and our mutual good."

The conference was a test of American leadership. The United States wanted (1) to co-ordinate the peace structure of the Western Hemisphere by reducing five existing treaties to one common agreement for the preservation of a *pax Americana*; (2) to secure a definite agreement to consult together in case of a threat from without or of trouble within, and to set up the necessary organization to prepare the way for consultation; and (3) to establish a common neutrality policy in the event of war or other form of conflict be-

¹ *The United States in World Affairs, 1936*, p. 207

tween two or more American republics. All of this added up to the formation of a league of American nations, with a permanent committee resembling the secretariat at Geneva. Under the lead of Dr. Saavedra Lamas, foreign minister of Argentina, the Latin-American nations showed themselves loath to go so far. Argentina was a staunch member of the League at Geneva and was the chief spokesman for that organization in South America; she wanted to finish arbitrating the Chaco war between Bolivia and Paraguay, one of the bloodiest conflicts in South American history, and she was perhaps the least willing of the republics to submit to North American leadership. Behind this lay the competition of her corn, wheat, and beef with similar American exports in the markets of Europe and her grievance against the United States for prohibiting the importation of Argentine beef under the guise of sanitary protection.

Nevertheless, the Buenos Aires Conference went a considerable distance in favor of the American program. The members formally pledged themselves to consult together either in case of a foreign threat or of a war between American states to the end that they might develop a method of mutual co-operation. They signed a Declaration of Principles of Inter-American Solidarity on the basis of no recognition of territorial changes by violence, no intervention by one state in the affairs of another, no forcible collection of pecuniary debts, and no settlement other than a peaceable one of disputes between American nations. The results did not give the collective security for which American diplomacy had striven—there was no permanent organization and therefore no way of developing a program of co-operation. Evidently the United States wanted to anticipate Hitler, and to head off Nazi and Fascist intrigue that might influence Latin-American politics through the large German and Italian minority blocs to be found in practically every South American country, especially in the three A B C powers.

The ensuing two years demonstrated the practical problems of hemispheric leadership. Stimulated by the Mexican example in expropriating foreign owners of land, Brazil, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, and Cuba all took steps against foreign oil concessions operating within their borders; and in March 1938 the Mexicans took the most sensational plunge of all by expropriating the private petroleum companies at one stroke. This amounted to outright confiscation of British and American property valued at \$450,000,000. Britain issued a sharp challenge, but the Roosevelt administration moved warily; Secretary Hull argued that private owners had a right to compensation when their property was condemned, but

actually he left the oil companies to their own devices. He could hardly let the issue pass unnoticed; the Mexican act was too provocative, and silence might encourage the governments in South America to take similar liberties. On the other hand, if he adopted the British method he would invite a break with Mexico and a serious breach in the facade of inter-American harmony. Mr. Hull prevented the breach, but at the eighth conference which opened at Lima in December 1938 he was confronted with an Argentine proposal that the American nations adopt the rule that private citizens could not appeal to their respective governments for protection of their rights abroad. This was the Calvo Doctrine, long advocated by Latin-American states but to which the United States had been vigorously opposed in the past. On this occasion American diplomacy succeeded in shunting the proposition to a committee for further study, but the soft answer thus given is a conspicuous contrast to the firm negative the State Department had been accustomed to make; it was proof that hemispheric leadership had to be bought, if the United States really coveted it.

Much more disquieting than this threat to property rights was the energy with which the Germans and Italians were pursuing their advantages in South America. Germany in particular capitalized the economic depression by concluding master agreements with Brazil, Argentina, and other important producers of raw materials and foods; Germany agreed to take large quantities of coffee, wheat, and so forth but, instead of paying in the time-honored method of an international money exchange, redeemed her purchases only by sending German goods. This arbitrarily reduced the South American demand for American goods to third place in exports to that continent. The situation was especially alarming for this country because it could not hope to adopt the German technique on any large scale. The secret of American trade relations with South America rests on the fact that it buys only a selected list of South American commodities, the rest being competitive with its own economy, on the other hand, the United States desires to export its manufactures generally to South American countries. Such desires can best be realized in a free international market; they do not fit the conditions of barter.

Nazi and Fascist propaganda followed the upward curve of German and Italian trade. "Cultural" attachés, appointed to consular and diplomatic missions at the South American capitals, educated German and Italian communities to the glories of Hitler and Mussolini. Various uniformed parties appeared in Brazil, Uruguay,

Argentina, and Chile; and in 1938 the Nazi government put on a theatrical exhibition when it invited all Germans in South America to vote on the question of annexing Austria to Germany. When the Eighth Pan-American Conference assembled at Lima in December 1938, there was no mistaking the "line" that the Nazis proposed to take against the United States. The German embassy was expanded, professors of "archaeology" appeared on the scene, and the South Americans were reminded of their former fears of North American aggression. At that time, too, the Germans controlled a strategic air line in competition with Pan-American Airways, and they had short-wave radio connection with Berlin. Plainly the Nazis considered South America a field worth tilling. It was not until 1938 that the United States took measures of counter publicity; it then organized a Division of Cultural Relations with Latin America to develop the spread of information about the United States, and entered on a program of exchange of students and professors with the Latin-American universities.

The American delegation arrived at Lima in December 1938 thoroughly alert to the threats from Germany. Hitler had won his greatest triumph at Munich in the preceding September. unprepared for resistance, Britain and France had allowed him to overrun Czechoslovakia, one of the richest industrial districts of Europe. There was now no room for doubt that the qualities of American leadership in the Western Hemisphere would soon be tested. As at Buenos Aires, the United States desired a consultative pact, with a permanent committee of the foreign ministers of the twenty-one states meeting at least biennially. But it also wanted a distinct warning written into the pact against Nazi intrigue. The American draft of the proposed treaty referred not only to threats of force but also to "activities of whatever kind directed by a *non-American* government with intention to subvert the domestic institutions of any American republic or to establish a *non-American system of government*."⁸ The delegation prepared this draft on shipboard, when they reached Lima, however, they found the chances of its success so slim that they refrained from submitting it.

Once more Argentina championed the opposition shared by Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay. She objected to making any hostile reference to Germany and even proposed to treat that country on a par with the United States. A threat from either a "*continental* or extra-continental power" would in her view justify

⁸ Quoted by Charles G. Fenwick, "The Monroe Doctrine and the Declaration of Lima," *American Journal of International Law*, 33 (1939), 263. Italics inserted.

consultation. Unquestionably Argentina hoped to play a sort of balance of power in South America and use Germany as a stand-off against the United States. Against the bloc of southern republics that leaned to her leadership stood Mexico and twelve other states in the region of the Caribbean. These were the states that benefited most from close association with the United States. Brazil performed the part of mediator. Since the American aim was to achieve a solid front, it would hardly do to negotiate a treaty in the face of five conspicuous nays. In consequence the United States again yielded its wish for a consultative pact in favor of a declaration which would not contain the same binding legal obligations. The Declaration was unanimously accepted, and appearances were preserved accordingly.

Nevertheless the Declaration of Lima inclined more to the American view than to the Argentinian. Consultation was not limited to cases of threats of territorial aggression. The Conference recognized that the real problem arose from the dangers of German conspiracies and attempts at setting up pro-Nazi regimes ready to act as puppets for Hitler. The essential thing was to keep ahead of the Germans and encourage the Latin-Americans to feel they enjoyed a common stake in the peace of the Western Hemisphere. The task of American diplomacy was to emphasize the freedom and individual capacity of the several republics but at the same time to inculcate a sense of unity and faith in American leadership. This was the most practicable method of securing the hemisphere. The previous retreat from interventionism had helped inspire confidence; Argentine jealousy and Mexican confiscation of American private property tagged the price the United States was expected to pay for its leadership. Argentina's ambitions were fairly defeated and Balkanization of the continent was prevented.

Hemispheric solidarity was soon to be tested. On September 2, 1939, Great Britain and France went to war with Germany. Four days later the government of Panama announced that it and eight other American republics had issued a summons to the other twelve to meet in consultation. Whatever the reason for leaving the initiative to this tiny nation, it soon became apparent that the real call came from the United States. American diplomacy aimed at a solid front of neutral nations, and this time it won an easy victory. The chief fruit of the conference was the adoption of a so-called safety zone embracing an area of the high seas which varied from three hundred to a thousand miles from the coasts of North and South America, Canada excepted. The theory was that these waters took

in an area of primary defense of the Western Hemisphere and that therefore they ought to be neutralized. If made effective, the security zone would furnish protection from raids or submarine attacks to vessels plying the sea lanes between North and South America.

Practically nothing was done to implement the Declaration, however. It was greeted with skepticism from the start, both at home and abroad, and only a month after it had been issued the United States government explained it away. Consequently there was little occasion for surprise when in December a spectacular fight took place between three British cruisers and a German pocket battleship off the coast of Uruguay. Following this incident the Inter-American Neutrality Committee, which had been set up under the Declaration of Panama, suggested certain steps for making the security zone a reality, such as the refusal of port facilities to the vessels of belligerents who violated the zone. Exclusion from the privilege of refueling and making repairs in a neutral port (especially necessary for the Germans, because unlike the British and French they held no bases of their own in the Western Hemisphere) would deter a naval commander from violating the zone, so the committee believed. The assumption was undoubtedly sound, but there were a number of complex administrative problems to be worked out before the idea could be put into operation. In justice to the committee it should be said that it recognized these problems; but in the meantime the whole scheme was quietly scuttled.

A far more pressing issue of hemispheric co-operation developed in June 1940. Nazi Germany had overwhelmed the Netherlands and the French Republic. Signs of trouble were not slow in multiplying in the Americas: a curious public reference by the president of Brazil to the "virile peoples" of Germany and Italy, suggesting that Brazil might be preparing to adjust herself to the "new order" in Europe; the acceleration of German propaganda in Chile; the capture by the Mexican police of a secret Nazi radio station; and the exposure of a conspiracy in Montevideo to overthrow the government and set up a Nazi puppet regime. But the important question was that of the future of the French and Dutch colonies in the West Indies. Would the Germans force a transfer of the islands, or would they find some more indirect means of using them to foment trouble in the Caribbean? So far as the Dutch islands of Curaçao and Aruba were affected, the answer was easy. These were the refining centers for the Venezuelan petroleum fields, the chief source of fuel supply for the British and French navies. With American approval they were occupied on May 10, 1940, by British and French forces; no risks

could be taken with respect to sabotage. Subsequently the United States itself joined in this "protective occupation" of the Dutch possessions, including Dutch Guiana, to which Brazil, the neighbor on the south, also dispatched troops.

The question of the two French island colonies, Martinique and Guadeloupe, was not so quickly answered. Having surrendered, the French government was now virtually the prisoner of the Germans, but the colonial authorities showed no signs of a revolt. They remained loyal to Vichy, the capital of the regime subservient to the Nazis. The islands were fortified, and an aircraft carrier, loaded with brand new planes made in America, was anchored there. Any attempt to occupy the islands meant a battle. The subject was uppermost at a conference of foreign ministers which convened at Havana in July. Once again the conference followed the lead of the United States. In reality that country had already determined the matter. With the unanimous support of both houses of Congress, the government had warned both France and Germany that it would recognize no transfer of sovereignty over territories in the New World; German professions of injured innocence were contemptuously brushed aside, and plans were pushed for the scheme that was laid before the conference at Havana.

Various other delegations offered their own remedies for the islands. As usual, Argentina took a position contrary to the United States, proposing that nothing be done until actual danger appeared. Such ineptitude would hardly meet the security requirements of the United States and got no serious consideration. The Final Act of the Conference, adopted July 30, 1940, resolved that an emergency committee, comprising a representative from each of the American republics, should be constituted to take over any European-owned territory in danger of attack, and a convention, subject to the approval of only two-thirds of the republics, was drafted with the intention of making the scheme permanent. The conception stemmed from the mandate system of the League of Nations; territories put under inter-American administration were to be governed by some one American republic in the interests of all, and either turned back to their legal proprietors at the end of the war or given independence, as the situation demanded.

Actually the Havana Conference left the United States with its hands free. Not only could it administer any occupied territory, subject only to report, but the Final Act gave "any of the American Republics, individually or jointly with others, . . . the right to act in the manner which its own defense or that of the Continent

requires."⁹ It did not need to await the meeting of an international committee before so acting. This left the Monroe Doctrine and the associated-defense policies of the United States substantially where they had always been, within the power of the American government to interpret and apply as it saw fit. The Havana Conference was an outstanding diplomatic achievement. It won the approval of the majority of the Latin-American states to the North American conception of action in defense of the hemisphere. Within a year sixteen republics had ratified the convention for the provisional administration of European colonies. The leadership of the United States was thus a substantial fact; its policies were its own, but they had the additional prestige of voluntary endorsement and support from the greater part of the southern continent. As a matter of fact, the work of the Havana Conference was never really implemented. The French colonies remained under the nominal authority of the Vichy government of France; but confidential conversations between an American commissioner and the governor of the islands achieved the desired end—the islands were effectively kept out of range of the long arm of Germany.¹⁰

The next and greatest test of inter-American solidarity came at the close of 1941. The United States was now a combatant. Japan forced the issue on December 7 with an attack on Pearl Harbor; and by acting first Germany and Italy anticipated an American declaration of war upon them. American diplomacy now set itself to construct a solid hemispheric front against its Axis enemies. So far as the states of Middle America were concerned, this proved a comparatively simple task. The three island republics of the Caribbean and the six Central American states readily joined in the war, thus closing their doors to German spies and saboteurs. Natural satellites of the United States, the complete co-operation of these nations was an absolute necessity for the defense of the Caribbean. Mexico, Venezuela, and Colombia severed relations with the Axis powers, thereby

⁹ Text of the Final Act in Jones and Myers, *Documents on American Foreign Relations*, II (Boston, 1940), 93-95.

¹⁰ Admiral Georges Robert, the French governor, continued to be something of a spitfire, however. In 1942-43 the United States and Great Britain drove the Germans from North Africa and won the active support of the French forces in that area. Of all the French not directly under the German thumb, Admiral Robert was alone in keeping up the game of Vichy. In April 1943 the United States broke all relations with Admiral Robert and put an embargo on food shipments to the French islands. After three months this action had the desired effect; Robert expressed a desire to "retire," and he was immediately replaced by an appointee of the French Committee of National Liberation.

saluting the United States with a reassuring gesture. And without a dissenting voice the South American governments, including even Argentina, cabled Washington that they would waive the usual rules of neutrality in its favor. The offer had its advantages: American naval and aircraft operating in southern waters were free to make unrestricted use of the port facilities of South America.

Without delay the foreign ministers of all the republics came together at Rio de Janeiro. In principle they all endorsed the thesis that an attack on the United States was to be regarded as an attack on them all. Brazil, moreover, proved her good will by breaking relations with the Axis while the conference was in session. The Brazilian attitude was the touchstone of the conference. German submarines were even then pressing into the South Atlantic; German military power, it was feared, would soon make a jump from North Africa to Dakar in French West Africa, whence it could harass the seaway from the British Isles to the Indian Ocean. From Dakar the Germans could leapfrog to the "Bulge" of Brazil, the control of which would determine the safety of the South Atlantic trade routes, the security of South America, and the eventual establishment of a base for hostile thrusts against the United States itself. Without firm support from Brazil the American position would be perilously exposed.

The Rio de Janeiro Conference was therefore a great triumph for American diplomacy, its achievement being fully equal to that at Havana in 1940. But when it came to a question of unanimous support, the United States had to take less. Chile and Argentina gave excuses: they both had long coastlines, too far away for the American Navy to protect. Japan had put on seven-league boots in the South Pacific; Germany was reaching for hers in the South Atlantic. It was more prudent for these two southern neighbors to wait and see. After two weeks the conference adjourned, having passed a resolution which left Argentina and Chile freedom of action. The resolution declared:

The American Republics, in accordance with the procedures established by their own laws and in conformity with the position and circumstances obtaining in each country in the existing continental conflict, recommend the breaking of their diplomatic relations with Japan, Germany and Italy, since the first-mentioned State attacked and the other two declared war on an American country.¹¹

¹¹ *The Department of State Bulletin*, VI (No. 137 [February 7, 1942]), 118-19. The complete text of the final Act of the Conference is available in this issue.

Within a few months all but Chile and Argentina fulfilled the spirit of this declaration. The Chilean government waited for a year before following the general example, but Argentina continued to turn the cold shoulder.

Fears for their safety were by no means the only deterrent in the case of these two countries. German influence, a force to be reckoned with in every South American country, operated boldly and openly in Buenos Aires and in Santiago. In common with other Nazi embassy and consular agencies in Latin America, the German missions to Chile and Argentina were flagrantly overstaffed. The embassy in Buenos Aires, for instance, in September 1941, employed one hundred and fifty persons in contrast to the British staff of thirty. Through this office there continued to clear through the entire course of the war the reports of spy rings active in collecting useful information all over the southern continent. Even Brazil, the best friend of the United States, proved fertile soil for enemy agents. The German colony there was large and prosperous, concentrated especially in the two states of São Paulo and Santa Catarina. And the growing volume of American military and airforce activity along the "Bulge" was certain to yield a harvest of information for spies to relay through Buenos Aires to Berlin via the short-wave radio that the "neutral" Argentine government permitted the Germans to retain. How to thwart the Germans from accumulating knowledge of ship movements and passing it along to submarine commanders proved an especially thorny problem. The American Ambassador in Buenos Aires submitted documentary proof of this sort of espionage, but except for the temporary arrest and detention of a half-dozen alleged spies the Argentine government did nothing. In May 1943 the personnel of a German submarine captured off Brazil admitted that it had received its information concerning ships from spies whose headquarters were in Argentina. American complaints were fully justified, but instances of this kind kept recurring.

It is difficult, perhaps impossible, to evaluate the Latin-American contribution to the war objectively. The American instinct to seek support, to hold the republics to the side of the United States, was sound beyond a doubt. German influence was vigilant and aggressive all through the war; how much more success it would have gained had American diplomacy been half-hearted can only be imagined. The United States exploited the geography of Latin America for the sake of winning the war. From Brazil it obtained the necessary bases, particularly along the "Bulge," for airfields, depots, and other installations from which offensive operations could be conducted

against the enemy in Africa. German chances for securing a foothold in South America were, of course, dashed; German submarines were harried from the South Atlantic; and so the hospitality of Brazilian soil became a ranking factor in the security of the United States. To keep that soil out of the hands of the enemy was of elemental importance; to use it in the cause of victory was of no mean value. Less willingly than Brazil, no doubt because she was less exposed, Ecuador granted to the United States the use of the Galápagos Islands as a defensive base in the Pacific. This concession completed the ring of island defenses surrounding the Panama Canal and guarded the shipping lanes to Peru and Chile.¹²

To these strategic advantages must be added the economic contribution of Latin America. Its foodstuffs and raw materials were channeled in favor of the Allied cause; conversely they were kept out of the hands of the Germans, except for the smuggling that, like espionage, flowed through Buenos Aires. To an unknown extent the American government poured capital into Latin America for the stimulation of industry that would contribute to the war effort. Equally secret was the amount of lend-lease aid and the manner in which it was distributed. Brazil appears to have been the chief favorite, a circumstance that contributed to the jealousy of her neighbors, particularly Argentina. To what extent the deep pocketbook of Uncle Sam affected Latin-American readiness to co-operate, to what extent the American government bought Latin-American support with proffers of lend-lease weapons and equipment, is a question. The Brazilians, for instance, had a right to American armed assistance in return for their prompt break with the Axis in January 1942; their act put them at some risk, and a request from them for a *quid pro quo* was natural, if made. But whether the cupidity of the lesser republics was stimulated by offers of lend-lease goods remains a matter of speculation. That there was a scramble during the war years on the part of various Latin-American dictators for such material is generally admitted. Factual data, however, are lacking, as is also the necessary information respecting the intentions of the American government in exploiting its lend-lease powers as a means of promoting the façade of hemispheric solidarity. Those powers were so vast as inevitably to furnish strong temptation to utilize them for political purposes.¹³

¹² Compare E. Taylor Parks and J. Fred Rippey, "The Galápagos Islands, a Neglected Phase of American Strategy Diplomacy," *Pacific Historical Review*, IX (1940), 37-45.

¹³ Senator Hugh Butler of Nebraska, a Republican, in December 1943 pub-

From the standpoint of mere numbers the record of Latin-American collaboration is impressive enough. Mexico declared war on the Axis powers in June 1942, Chile broke relations in the following January, Bolivia entered the war in April 1943; and the Argentine dictator carried out a surprise feint in January 1944 by trumpeting a break in relations with the Axis. In all there were thirteen declarations of war and seven diplomatic breaks. The material advantages, however, lay less in these flourishes and more in the strategic and economic gains as summarized above. Legal belligerency did not spell actual combat status. The latter indeed was not requested. But in order to quench her thirst for glory Brazil dispatched an expeditionary force in 1943 to the Italian front, and Mexico made ready to follow suit. Military assistance from the Latin-Americans, however, would weigh only very slightly in the scales of victory. The negative purpose of strengthening a Pan-American *cordon sanitaire* against Nazism was beyond a doubt the chief end of United States policy.

If a deeper insight into the inter-American equation is to be gained, however, we can hardly be satisfied with a simple division of Latin-American opinion alleged to exist between pro-Axis and anti-Axis (or pro-Nazi and pro-democratic) sentiment. A more sophisticated approach to Latin-American politics, domestic as well as foreign, is necessary. In particular, the peculiar course of Argentina needs further elucidation. Successful in thwarting the United States before the Rio de Janeiro Conference, the Argentines continued thereafter to play a clever, if conscienceless, game of ducks and drakes. First came in June 1943 a sudden coup by a military faction in Buenos Aires overthrowing the existing regime of President Castillo. Castillo had dealt kindly with German spies. Would the Colonels' Clique be different? In the competent hands of Colonel Juan Perón, the strongest man in this new regime, appeals were made to the Argentine working class: promises of social legislation and lower prices were held out to them. Meanwhile through a pretense of cutting off the broadcasting privileges of Axis agents, the Colonels actually hoodwinked the United States, followed by Great Britain, into recognizing them. They hungered for lend-lease equipment, and they feared that the favors already shown Brazil had given their

licly charged the administration with wasting \$6,000,000,000 in trying to promote its Latin-American policies. The administration promptly repudiated the charge, but volunteered no information of its own. How much was waste and how much was necessary and wise expenditure will never be known.

For a discussion of lend-lease see chapter 26 below (pp. 426-30).

northern rival a long advantage in the play of South American international politics. The Argentine foreign minister was realistic enough to say so. He actually wrote Secretary Hull to the effect that Argentine co-operation was for sale. A shipment of airplanes, spare parts, armaments, and machinery from the United States, he declared, was needed "to restore Argentina to the position of equilibrium to which it is entitled with respect to other South American countries." The communication was so bare-faced that it gave the American Secretary of State an unusual chance to lecture the Argentine government on its inter-American duties, and he made the most of it.¹⁴

This diplomatic incident, however, was merely the beginning of a long, indecisive duel between the two countries. The Colonels' Clique aggressively resumed the traditional Argentine policy of beckoning Chile, Paraguay, Bolivia, and Uruguay into a separate bloc, while American diplomacy aimed at isolating and eventually overthrowing the regime. But the odds favored Argentina. Paraguay entered a virtual customs union with her; Chile agreed to a commercial treaty which laid the groundwork for a customs union; most startling of all was a military coup in Bolivia in December 1943 that copied the methods of the Colonels' Clique. Soon it was discovered that the Bolivian Majors' Clique had intimate personal ties with the Argentine Colonels. Bolivia might technically be "at war" with the enemies of the United States—her dictator president had declared a state of war some months previously. But it is stretching the imagination to take such acts seriously. The real motive behind the Bolivian "declaration of war" seems to have been to give the dictator a pretext for tightening his stranglehold over Indian labor in the tin mines; and though the Majors' Clique grandiloquently proclaimed their loyalty to the cause of the United Nations shortly after seizing power, the similarity of their internal program with that of the Argentine Colonels afforded sound cause for doubt. Uruguay alone among the southern countries remained aloof from Argentine influence, and even furnished asylum for political refugees from Buenos Aires. When early in 1944 rumors developed of a possible Argentine attack on her small neighbor, American naval and air forces suddenly appeared in the harbor of Montevideo. This naval demonstration was the most pointed warning the United States had yet given to its would-be rival.

Signs were not wanting in 1944 that the American administra-

¹⁴ The correspondence is printed in *The Department of State Bulletin* IX (No. 220 [September 11, 1943]), 159-66.

tion was willing to try experiments in the hope of breaking the Argentine dictatorship. A successful conspiracy within the Colonels' Clique in January, leading to a bolder pro-Axis attitude than before, evidently alarmed the government at Washington. Paradoxically, under General Ramirez Argentina had broken relations with the Axis powers, now under General Farrell this technical breach continued, but the German, Italian, and Japanese embassies in Buenos Aires remained open for business as usual. The United States on its part withheld recognition from General Farrell but kept its embassy open for observation purposes. This gesture yielding no results, the American Ambassador was called home in June "for consultation," as soon were also the British Ambassador and the heads of missions from many of the American states. Argentina was now under a sort of diplomatic quarantine. Meanwhile American ships were ordered to remain away from Argentine ports and restrictions were imposed on exports to that country.

Far from discouraging the Colonels, however, these moves seem to have given them a tonic. Not even the successful Allied invasion of Normandy induced them to change their tune. Indeed, Colonel Perón, Argentina's "strong man," came forth publicly with the boldest utterance he had yet made. It was a speech of defiance against American domination, a manifesto of Argentine nationalism, and an expression of indifference as to which side won the war. American influence kept Argentina on the blacklist of international conferences that convened in 1944, and American leaders, including President Roosevelt, scathingly condemned Argentina for repudiating her inter-American pledges, but still the military dictatorship in Buenos Aires went arrogantly on its way. Plainly the American policy advertised the weaknesses of the inter-American system, not its strength. Four South American countries refused to support the diplomatic quarantine; none of them would co-operate in imposing economic sanctions; nor would Great Britain, ready enough to help in harmless gestures of disapproval, suffer the consequences sure to follow from an economic breach with the Argentines. "We like the Argentine brand of Fascism as little as does Mr. Cordell Hull," sententiously remarked the *Manchester Guardian*, "but we also prefer Argentine beef to American pork."¹⁵

Attempts to cudgel the Argentine Colonels into co-operation naturally entailed the major effort. Because of her position and her power of example in Latin America, Argentina could do the most

¹⁵ Cited in Arthur P. Whitaker, ed., *Inter-American Affairs, 1944* (New York, 1945), p. 19.

damage. She could, in fact, do more than advance the cause of Hitler—she could put American influence with the other Latin-American republics on the defensive. The military coup d'état in Bolivia is a case in point; it was precipitated at least in part by Argentine machinations. A common enough occurrence in Latin-America, the Bolivian affair nevertheless warrants special attention. Proponents of inter-American solidarity deliberately accepted the challenge. If they could hold the line in Bolivia, they might reasonably expect to put the Argentine Colonels in chancery.

We have now had a glimpse of the inside of inter-American relationships. Factional intrigue and political warfare are of the essence at all times. The immediate wartime issue was how to hold down the activities of enemy agents, how to bolster various shaky governments in Latin America against revolutions designed to fortify Axis influence. The 1942 conference at Rio de Janeiro recognized this, and conceived a plan for coping with it. Arrangements were made for setting up a Committee for Political Defense. Seven members were to comprise the committee, and they were to be impressed with their responsibility to the inter-American system as a whole rather than to their respective nations. The committee was told to act by majority vote, and was given a free hand in working out its destiny. But action, not mere study, was to be the keynote of its labors. Having determined a course of action, the committee was to so advise the individual governments, and they, it was hoped, would assume responsibility for executing its plan. Here was a genuine attempt to seize the bull by the horns, to create a policy-making agency collective in its responsibilities. The point is that the committee was given the initiative; the underlying weakness of the inter-American system was to be faced on a collective basis. Any one of the twenty-one governments might sulk if it chose; it was not obliged to take orders from the committee; but, assuming of course that the committee did its part, non-co-operation would localize the blame.¹⁶

¹⁶ The full title of this unique committee was the Emergency Advisory Committee for Political Defense. Its collective functions resemble those of the former League of Nations Council. The Conference at Rio de Janeiro left it to the Pan-American Union to elect the seven members, apparently with the thought that the Union would exercise its independent judgment. Pleading lack of time, the Union, however, appealed to seven different governments—viz, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, the United States, Mexico, Uruguay, and Venezuela—and each of these governments named a member. In spite of this initial false step, nevertheless, the committee developed a real sense of collective responsibility and a genuine feel for its job. Perhaps the credit for its accomplishment should go in the main to its able chairman, the Uruguayan foreign minister, Alberto Guani. Lying between two large

The Committee for Political Defense concentrated energetically on its task. Within a little over a year it visited most, if not all, of the American republics, inquired closely into the peculiar problems of each one traceable to enemy intrigue, and recommended a program of action for each government to follow. It appears to have been unhampered in its investigations, and even the Argentine regime gave it a hearing. Its findings were published in two memoranda supplying explicit information on Axis intrigue, the role of Axis diplomats stationed in Argentina and Chile, their methods of operation, and the names of their Latin-American fellow travelers. No stone seems to have been left unturned in the effort to uncover the facts and prescribe the remedy. The committee undoubtedly did its part. The follow-up by the several governments is a different matter, however. Here the record becomes a complete vacuum, and thus we have no data on which to judge the ultimate effectiveness of the committee's work.

Now to return to the Bolivian affair. It was the Committee for Political Defense that led in making a test out of this incident. Four days after the event the Committee recommended a common nonrecognition policy toward governments established by force. It advised the other governments to exchange information and consult among themselves, and especially to inquire into the attitude of the new regime toward its inter-American undertakings before giving it their endorsement. With the United States and Brazil in the lead, all the governments except Argentina fell into line. Economic pressure was exerted against the Bolivian Majors, forcing them to cleanse their ranks of the most objectionable members and drop the connection with Argentina. By the late spring of 1944 the time seemed ready for the all-clear signal. Mr. Avra Warren, the United States Ambassador to Panama, was sent down to have a

countries, Uruguay had most at stake in making a collective system operate. Consequently she could be relied upon to support the American program. In addition, Sr. Guani had the benefit of his experience as one-time president of the League of Nations Assembly. When under his guidance the committee adopted a line of policy not in keeping with Argentine ideas, the Argentine member withdrew. See Carl B. Spaeth and William Sanders, "The Emergency Advisory Committee for Political Defense," *American Journal of International Law*, XXXVIII (1944), 218-41.

There were three other standing committees operating under the inter-American system during the war: the Inter-American Juridical Committee, whose achievements seem to have been nil; the Economic and Financial Committee, with headquarters at Washington; and the Inter-American Defense Board, also with headquarters at Washington. The operations of the last two committees have been kept entirely from public view. The Committee for Political Defense was seated at Montevideo.

last look. Some eighty Axis agents were rounded up. Then in June the State Department in Washington announced in the name of all nineteen governments that the Bolivian case had been thoroughly reviewed, and that they had agreed there was no longer reason for withholding recognition. One possibility, however, was overlooked: the chance of a rigged election. Within ten days after relations had been re-established Bolivia had such an election; the national revolutionary party and its leader, who had been tainted with support from the pro-Axis elements in Argentina, were returned to power, and soon the pro-Axis Bolivian politicians who had been cashiered earlier in order to deceive the other governments were back in their places. The Majors, with the help of the Colonels, had made a laughing stock of the inter-American system.

In the meantime most of the Latin-American countries continued through 1944 along the normal road of political turmoil. Only in the immediate neighborhood of Argentina could the trouble be chalked up against the Colonels. Paraguay drew closer to Buenos Aires, younger army officers in Chile showed they had the power to frighten, though not to win. In Peru the existing president kept his seat, reassured by the timely arrival of lend-lease equipment from the United States. Colombia, Ecuador, and all five of the Central American states went through a turbulent year. A bloody street fight broke out in Guatemala City in October. Cuba, on the other hand, had the novel experience of an orderly change of rulers. The dictator ex-sergeant, Batista, gallantly bowed himself out in favor of his rival, Grau San Martín, though not before his henchmen had swept the cupboard bare. Perhaps Batista's docility was affected by the emptiness of his party chest. The United States Ambassador, Spruille Braden, had seen to that. American firms doing business in Cuba had been told to refrain from making the customary campaign contributions. In Brazil a small but dark cloud appeared on the horizon of Brazilian-American friendship. Foreign Minister Oswaldo Aranha, long recognized as a sturdy defender of the inter-American system, was forced to resign at the behest of his rival in the cabinet, the minister of war, General Dutra. Dutra was the spokesman of the nationalistic, anti-American forces in the country. Washington reacted nervously to this incident by summoning home its Ambassador "for consultation." If Brazil deserted the cause, inter-American solidarity was as good as lost. Which way would the dictator-president, Getulio Vargas, who had ruled his country since 1936, turn now? Vargas, it so happened, was able to hold the line. But he had just one more year of grace. In October

1945 he too was driven out, an election ensued, and General Dutra became president.¹⁷

Meanwhile as the lights of German Nazism flickered out, the Red Star of the Soviet Union gleamed the more brightly. Russian diplomatic missions appeared first in Mexico and Cuba in 1943; to Mexico City went Constantin Oumansky, formerly the U.S.S.R.'s representative at Washington. Nor did Russia overlook the example the Germans had set in supporting large embassy staffs. Her missions in Mexico City and Havana served as training schools for the extension of her influence elsewhere in Latin America, and before the close of 1943 she had diplomatic representation in Colombia and Uruguay. Paralleling this resurgence of Russia was a tendency among Latin-American factions to divide into extreme right and left groups, as in Chile, Colombia, and especially Mexico, where a "Sin-arquist" movement, priding itself on its attachment to the reactionary Falangists of Spain, expressed itself hysterically against the alleged machinations of "Moscow agents."

To fall in step with such extremism and conjure up a great "Red Peril" in Latin America with dark designs on the security of the United States would be ludicrous. The simplest facts show that where in Latin America hostility or coolness toward the United States was most pronounced—as in Argentina and, to an increasing extent in 1943-44 in Brazil—there the voices of Communism were practically inaudible. The truth is that the wartime marriage of the "good neighbors" was fading. The United States was now a little like the polygamous husband who takes his wives for granted. His wooing became less ardent. He was absorbed in his job of winning the war in Europe and the Pacific. Inter-American solidarity had, for practical purposes, completed its mission in the years of danger. It had climbed to the peak of its efficiency shortly after the Rio de Janeiro Conference. It had been a marriage of convenience to a much greater extent than is generally admitted. Essentially the inter-American conferences from Montevideo in 1933 to Rio de Janeiro in 1942 had been instruments for barring Germany from the Western Hemisphere. From the standpoint of the grand strategy it was a case of throwing the rear breastworks up first. But with the North African campaign, which started in the fall of 1942, the Anglo-American powers seized the offensive and held it. The Germans fell

¹⁷ Whitaker, *op. cit.*, pp. 26-56, contains an excellent summary and interpretation of these 1944 upheavals. See also Hernane Tavares de Sá, "Camouflage of Harmony," *The Inter-American*, August 1944, 10 ff. Whitaker declares that Professor Tavares represents a viewpoint widely held in Latin America.

back into Europe; the flanks of South America were no longer exposed; only the spies and *agents provocateurs* were left. South America now being distinctly a secondary field, the impulse to summon consultative assemblages of the American states cooled after Rio de Janeiro. Even in developing its anti-Argentine policy the American administration—the same that for ten years had exploited popular sentiments about “the good neighbors” to such good advantage—displayed no taste for advance consultation. And the case of the United States versus Argentina in 1944 assumed, from the vantage ground of other American capitals, more and more the characteristics of an intervention program.

Latin-Americans, moreover, discovered other reasons for skepticism. A Congressional committee report, rendered in 1943 and frankly recommending permanent retention of naval and air bases in South America by the United States, was like a tocsin of alarm, particularly in Brazil and Ecuador.¹⁸ Symptoms of a reaction in the United States itself, such as the sensational charges of extravagance in lend-lease expenditures, had their effect on Latin-American psychology; while the dropping out of American politics of Sumner Welles, the Undersecretary of State, and of the warm-hearted Henry Wallace, both zealous friends of Latin America, left an unfortunate impression. Furthermore, the indifference of the United States to the calling of another inter-American conference became very pointed in the fall of 1944. At Dumbarton Oaks in Washington, D. C., a small meeting of the great powers finished its labors in October on a draft plan for making over the wartime United Nations into a permanent world organization to keep the peace. Rightly or wrongly, the Latin-Americans felt slighted. Even Mexico, which had collaborated intimately with the United States during the war, stirred uneasily.

Shortly after Dumbarton Oaks an International Civil Aviation Conference convened in Chicago, with representation from all of Latin America except Argentina. The shrewd Colonels in Argentina saw their chance to make a thrust: at Chicago the Latin-American delegations for once formed a united front, since they had common aviation problems; suddenly from Argentina came a public request to the Pan American Union to call the foreign ministers together for a consideration of the problem of her inter-American standing. The stroke drove home. it detached the Latin-American world from the United States. The Mexican foreign minister,

¹⁸ The Brazilian professor, Tavares, stresses this issue as first in importance in arousing suspicion in his country.

Ezequiel Padilla, himself a Leftist with a natural antipathy for the Buenos Aires type of regime, led in saying that Argentina ought to be given a chance to rectify her errors. Padilla followed this up with a formula for combining the Argentine question with the general question of a postwar international organization in relation to the American states. Of course, the record is incomplete; nevertheless, it appears that Mexican diplomacy prodded the United States into consenting to a conference. At any rate, the Washington administration had obviously tried through the fall to dodge the issue, not until the Argentine demand arose had it even hinted at its willingness to deliberate with the other American states on the question of their relation to the United Nations Organization. It seems reasonable to conclude that only the implied threat of a Latin-American bolt, with Argentina in the role of an abused nation, reconciled the American government to a hemispheric conference at this time.

With Mexico the prime mover for the conference, Mexico City was its natural meeting place. The conference filled sixteen days in February and March, 1945, about half-way through the interval between Dumbarton Oaks and the all-United Nations Conference for International Organization that opened in April at San Francisco.¹⁹ Thus Mexico City was a place to air grievances and to decide how the inter-American system was to fit into the larger organization. The role of the American delegation, headed by Secretary of State Stettinius, was to iron out the wrinkles in hemispheric solidarity and restore harmony to the family circle. In practice this meant soothing the hurt feelings of the Latin-Americans for having ignored their presence for so long. Inasmuch as Mr Stettinius had just come from a very important closed conference of the great powers in the Crimea, which had endorsed the Dumbarton Oaks Proposals and had set the date for the Conference at San Francisco, this duty called for some tact. An amiable concession with respect to the Pan American Union seems to have made an impression; no longer was the United States to monopolize the chairmanship of the governing board of the Union. Also it was agreed that thereafter inter-American conferences would be spaced regularly four years apart and that annual meetings of the foreign ministers would take place during the intervals.

But the chief dilemma of the Conference was the perennial "what-to-do-about Argentina" problem. A cautious resolution was passed, exhorting the Colonels to reform and hinting that a declaration of war on the now almost-defeated Axis would put them on

¹⁹ See chapter 27 below (p. 454)

the road to salvation.²⁰ Uruguay, Colombia, and Brazil, however, sponsored a movement to go much farther than this. They desired a declaration against armed invasion by any American republic of the territory of another. This was the kernel of the Act of Chapultepec, which was formally adopted by the Conference and which represented its main achievement. It was a return to the suggestion for collective intervention made by President Roosevelt at the Montevideo Conference of 1933. A state which menaced its neighbors was now an object of concern to the whole continent. Roosevelt in 1933 was undoubtedly thinking of a possible resurgence of political anarchy—the familiar malady in earlier years of Caribbean republics—and was groping for a technique which would legitimize American intervention in the Caribbean region, should it ever again become necessary. But Uruguay and Brazil were thinking of the saber-rattling colonels on the farther banks of the Rio Plate. They wanted assurances of armed support from the United States.

American diplomacy, however, warily avoided an outright promise of assistance and sought refuge in the language of delay. The final draft of the Act of Chapultepec stipulates merely

That in case acts of aggression occur or [in case] there may be reasons to believe that an aggression is being prepared by any other State against the integrity and inviolability of territory, or against the sovereignty or political independence of an American State, the States signatory to this declaration will consult amongst themselves in order to agree upon measures it may be advisable to take.²¹

In addition, the Act stated that the American republics "should" negotiate a multilateral treaty "establishing procedures whereby such threats or acts may be met." But it holds out no promise that such a treaty will be concluded or that it will guarantee mutual armed support.

To all appearances the various delegations retired from Mexico

²⁰ This condition proved an easy one for the Argentines to meet, and they scored heavily on it. They waited until the very eve of the San Francisco Conference and then "declared war." The move did not alter the freedom of German agents in Buenos Aires, neither did it alter the fact that Hitler had already been beaten. But it embarrassed the United States, which now had to concede Argentina's "right" to a seat in the Conference. The admission of Argentina got a well-merited though ineffective rebuke from the Soviet Union. Argentina received her seat with the help of the United States; but Russia's protest forced a vote on the question which drove a wedge into the ranks of the inter-American "solidarity."

²¹ Text of the Act of Chapultepec in *The Department of State Bulletin*, XII (No. 297 [March 4, 1945]), 339-40.

City in good humor and full agreement. The façade of inter-American solidarity was restored. But it was nonetheless a very shaky façade. Argentina continued unregenerate, and Uruguay in the succeeding November came forth with a fresh proposal for collective intervention. This time the Uruguayans urged collective intervention to preserve *democracy*, they suggested that denial of essential rights by a government to its people, as well as failure to fulfill its international obligations, should constitute ground for collective action.²² The idea and the wording of the Uruguayan note call forth recollections of the mystical Holy Alliance of 1815, with the term democracy substituted for legitimacy. "A multilateral collective action," declares this curious note, "exercised with complete unselfishness by all the other republics of the continent, aimed at achieving in a spirit of brotherly prudence the mere re-establishment of essential rights, and directed toward the fulfillment of freely contracted juridical obligations, must not be held to injure the government affected, but rather it must be recognized as being taken for the benefit of all, including the country which has been suffering under such a harsh regime."

Somewhat too quickly the American Secretary of State, James F. Byrnes, announced the unqualified adherence of the United States to these principles, though he did take the precaution to stipulate that "full consultation among the Republics" should take place first.²³ Shortly after, the revolutionary government of Venezuela showed its willingness to be more precise. Venezuela declared she was willing to "repudiate" a government that kept its footing by force but was entirely opposed to armed intervention.²⁴ Most Latin-American states, it soon developed, concurred in this stand, though the attitude of the United States remained somewhat ambiguous. Calculations of the possible turns American policy might take must include the future status of naval and air bases in South America,

²² The Uruguayan note is printed prominently in *The Department of State Bulletin*, XIII (No. 335 [November 25, 1945]), 864-66.

²³ *New York Times*, November 28, 1945.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, December 11, 1945. A left-wing revolution had broken out in Caracas late in October which seemed to sharpen the differences between Communists and Falangists in Latin America. The new regime immediately singled out Spain and Santo Domingo for special denunciation, but for some strange reason it overlooked Argentina, Cuba, Ecuador, Paraguay, and Panama immediately recognized the Venezuelan government, thereby ignoring the 1943 policy of collective recognition (*Ibid.*, October 27, 1945). Anti-Americanism being a part of the equation of local politics in these tiny countries, doubtless the government of each, in making this "bold" move, saw a chance to square itself with the local politicians for its sturdy independence.

still under United States control at the close of 1945. Whether the American government would abandon these bases or would keep them indefinitely was one of the numerous enigmas in world politics six months after the fighting in the Second World War had ceased. The bases had been built to protect the Americas from foreign invasion, but they also were capable of use for adventures in interventionism in the southern half of South America.²⁵

The record of inter-American solidarity seems to show that it is a wartime development, to be explained principally in terms of a common sense of danger from overseas. The period of greatest rapprochement was approximately ten years in length, from the Montevideo Conference of 1933 to the Rio de Janeiro Conference of 1942. Soon thereafter the seams began to open. The United States grew indifferent; the Latin-Americans became restive and hostile. The Mexico City Conference of 1945 pretended to keep up an elaborate front, but its cautiously worded doctrine of collective intervention seemed a long way from practical application. Hemispheric schism, rather than hemispheric solidarity, seemed more likely to be the effect of any experiment with this doctrine. In the meantime, in the words of one long-range observer, "Santa Claus was dying." The life-giving stream of easy money from the United States into Latin America was drying up fast in 1945. Subsidies for rubber production in Brazil and Bolivia were ended, as were the wartime contracts for buying the total annual output of copper, tin, and other strategic materials. Lend-lease was no longer an instrument for maintaining the political status quo. With Venezuela displaying a tendency to form a "democratic bloc" of socialistically-minded republics, with a nationalistic victory in Brazil, and with the Argentine Colonels riding higher than ever and boasting proudly of their ascendancy over Bolivia and Paraguay, inter-American solidarity seemed in 1945 to be ready to face the divorce courts. The celebra-

²⁵ An article by George H. Butler on "Inter-American Relations after World War II," *The Department of State Bulletin*, XIII (No. 316) [July 15, 1945], 88-99, suggests as a basis for collective intervention agreement by two-thirds of the twenty-one republics, which two-thirds also represents 40 per cent of the total population. This, argues Mr. Butler, would deprive the United States of an exclusive veto power in inter-American affairs, since two-thirds of the most populous American republics, exclusive of the United States, could meet the 40 per cent requirement. In view of the reception of the Uruguayan proposal, it is hard to imagine a two-thirds vote in favor of intervention; on the other hand it is not hard to anticipate a two-thirds vote against it.

The weekly issues of the *Bulletin* constitute an important source of information on inter-American matters; but, representing as they do the official views, they must be studied with some reservations.

tion of another wedding feast would surely tax the skill of the diplomats.²⁶

²⁶ At the close of the year Colonel Perón announced his candidacy for the Argentine presidency and boldly coupled it with the assertion, obviously intended for American benefit, that the Soviet Union had been the only real victor in the war. He was also reported to be pushing the fascist factions in Chile and Uruguay. (*New York Times*, December 11, 1945)

In the ensuing campaign the State Department openly intervened to defeat Perón, but its only accomplishment was to cover itself with embarrassment. Perón was triumphantly elected; he began at once to organize an anti-American bloc (*New York Times*, April 24, 1946), and in June he effected a significant diplomatic tieup with Moscow.

COLLECTIVE SECURITY

The Balance of Power and the Development of the Idea

AMERICAN diplomacy has been familiar with the idea of the balance of power in Europe since the days of the Revolution; and it has carefully used that system as a frame of reference in calculating the needs of American security. So firmly was the European balance in British keeping, however, that the United States had little occasion for anxiety in this direction until the War of 1914-1918.

Substantially the same concept of a balance of power was worked out among the nations competing for position in Eastern Asia in the nineteenth century. There was this difference, however, that in Eastern Asia, especially in China, the United States had an immediate part in attempts to maintain the balance. American diplomacy chose the responsibility for holding the balance of power in this region early in the twentieth century, and it insisted on keeping this position of leadership after the War of 1914-1918. In spite of the experiences of that war and the lessons that it offered, the United States denied similar responsibility for the peace of Europe until the rush of events forced it in 1941 to recover the position which it had sacrificed twenty years before.

Linked with the balance-of-power system, ideas of collective security developed through the nineteenth century. In Europe the idea received expression through the Concert System, which indeed was indistinguishable in practice from that of the balance of power. With this, as we have noted, American diplomacy had no direct contacts. But among the powers interested in China collective security operated in a negative way. The object was to preserve competition and prevent any one power from gaining exclusive commercial or political ascendancy over the Celestial Empire. In a positive manner Anglo-American statesmanship attempted to institutionalize and universalize collective security through the League of Nations in 1918. This experiment having failed, the United States nevertheless kept the idea alive through the instrumentality of the Kellogg Peace Pact. Events of the next dozen years forced the development of an integrated system of security on a scale never before

considered, in the Americas through the partnership with Canada and the republics to the south, and in Europe and Asia through a system of working alliances with the British Empire, the Soviet Union, China, and other nations which formed the fighting front against the German-Italian-Japanese Axis. From this there emerged in 1942 the concept of the United Nations, a great wartime coalition based on principles of mutual aid and assistance. But clearly, if the fruits of a successful war were not again to be sacrificed, it was meant that this concept of universal security, actually operating on a scale never conceived in past history, should be applied permanently to the international order and adjusted to the conditions of peace.

American diplomacy has been directly associated with the system of the balance of power in the following cases: (1) The World War of 1914-1918; (2) The Paris Peace Conference and the League of Nations; (3) The Independence and Territorial Integrity of China, 1899-1943; (4) The Security of the Western Pacific, 1918-1943, (5) The Second World War, 1939-1945; (6) The United Nations.

CHAPTER 22

THE WORLD WAR OF 1914-1918

WHAT MEANING did the war which broke out in Europe in August 1914 hold for the United States? Most persons, to be sure, did not so much as raise the question—they saw in the war no issue that would affect the United States in other than an emotional or sentimental way. The German violation of Belgium created the one vivid impression: the act seemed an unprovoked outrage against a small nation; no plea of military necessity could excuse it.

With that moral judgment American opinion stopped short. With few exceptions it made no attempt to appraise the possible outcome of the European war in terms of its effects upon the United States. Fears for the future took the form only of fears for the country's neutrality and domestic tranquillity. The government made a gesture of curbing inflammatory expressions of sentiment. It was especially dubious about the press, and it dreaded reprisal from abroad and recrimination from within. Too many voices raised in disagreement on European issues in a country whose population was

so varied in national origins would throw open the door to civil strife. Harboring fears of this kind, President Wilson issued a stirring appeal to the people to be impartial in their thinking.

A rare few were disposed to frame the question differently. Prior to the coming of Wilson, the American government, or at least the Department of State, appears to have had very definite convictions concerning the relation of the United States to the general international situation. An article written by Mr. Lewis Einstein, an experienced American diplomat, and published with the approval of the Department establishes this point. Focusing his attention on the fundamental character of the issues that by then existed between Britain and Germany, Einstein flatly declared that a war between these two powers could not "leave America indifferent. In too many regions of the world would its interests be affected by such reality." If the balance of power were disturbed in Europe, repercussions would be felt in the Far East. Even the temporary withdrawal of European influence from that area would leave the United States face to face with a commensurately more powerful Japan, against whom it might be obliged to sustain its policies in China single-handed. Furthermore, the writer proceeded, British naval superiority represents for the United States "an essential element in the maintenance and stability of the European balance of power." A British defeat, which he thought very unlikely, would revolutionize the position of the United States. It would, for instance, expose Canada to attack from an angered Germany. A long-drawn-out war might have scarcely less effect. Britain would grow dependent on the United States for supplies, sea battles might take place in American waters, and the French and British West Indies might even be captured. How, queried Mr. Einstein, could the American fleet maintain the status quo in the Far East against Japan and at the same time defend the Caribbean? And in case Britain was defeated and Canada and the West Indies annexed to the United States for safety, what then? Such an outcome, he felt confident,

would leave [the United States] confronted by an Empire supreme on land and sea, and would force it to pursue a preparation of armaments which for its own preservation could not be inferior to what it might be called upon to face. . . . The disintegration of the British Empire would be a defeat for America by the erection of a Power supreme on land and sea.¹

¹ Lewis Einstein, "The United States and Anglo-German Rivalry," *Living Age*, Vol. 276, series 7, Vol. 58 (February 1913), 323-32. The appearance of this

There is no way of measuring the impression left by the writings of Lewis Einstein. But also other men who had had a hand in American foreign policy in the past were disturbed over the prospects of a German victory. If Germany should win, said Theodore Roosevelt, "it would only be a matter of a few years before we should have to fight her." And, he added, it would be "quite in the cards to see Germany and Japan cynically forget the past and join together against the United States and any other power that stood in their way."² The former President evidently shared with many of his associates a general recollection of German hostility. They recalled sundry incidents in German-American relations which seemed to point to a coming struggle for power between the two nations—the friction over Samoa during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the German jealousy of American victories over Spain, the apparent disposition to take advantage of Venezuela in 1902 and to look for naval stations in the Caribbean while the construction of the Panama Canal was in progress. Germany's naval rivalry with the British had had its echoes in the United States. On the other hand, Germany's purchase of the Marshall and other islands in the Pacific from Spain, shortly after the United States had taken Guam and the Philippines, made no impression on the American mind, although the German islands lay directly astride the American route to Manila. Germany's obvious weakness in this area, so remote from the Fatherland, probably explains the indifference of American naval strategists on this score.

What Germany was suspected of aiming at in the Caribbean aroused more anxiety than what she actually did in the remote western Pacific. Had not Bismarck dubbed the Monroe Doctrine "an international impertinence"? It was partly for Germany's benefit that Elihu Root had devised the Platt Amendment in 1900, binding Cuba to the United States. A former close associate of Theodore Roosevelt, Root was nevertheless deeply respected by Woodrow Wilson, and his ideas continued to find lodgment at the Department of State. He was instrumental in persuading the President to lead the fight against the discriminatory Panama Canal Tolls Act, against

article at that time suggests that an experienced administration would in 1914 have developed a foreign policy more distinctly in accord with the American power position than the amateurish Wilson government was able to effect. At the very time the Department of State needed the utmost knowledge and experience in relation to European affairs it was in charge of a well-meaning but futile politician from the Middle West, William Jennings Bryan.

² Quoted by R. Buchanan, "Theodore Roosevelt and American Neutrality," *American Historical Review*, XLIII (1938), 777

which Great Britain had protested as contrary to her rights under the Hay-Pauncefote Treaty of 1901; he also sponsored the appointment of Robert Lansing to the post of counselor in the State Department. A modest, retiring man, Lansing proved from the start an influential figure in formulating the administration's foreign policies. His perceptions were particularly keen with reference to the dominant American position in the Caribbean; and he was the first official in the Wilson administration to grasp the full import of the European war's relation to the United States.

Quicker than others to recommend a line of policy, however, was President Charles W. Eliot of Harvard. Eliot had a deep foreboding of the effect of a German victory on competitive armament building. Other nations would live constantly under the shadow of sudden invasion, he argued. To avert such a calamity the United States should participate at once on the side of the Entente and aid in blockading the Central Powers.

Sharing the views of both Eliot and Roosevelt was President Wilson's close friend and political counselor, Colonel Edward M. House. "Germany's success will ultimately mean trouble for us," he prophesied, we shall be obliged to "build up a military machine of vast proportions." The colonel had been an advocate of an organized peace movement, sensitive to the causes of the growing friction abroad, he had gone on a mission to Berlin in 1914 in the hope of arranging a sort of international consortium for the development of backward countries. German ambitions might be softened, he thought, if the doors of South America were opened to German private capital and immigration, in return the German and British governments could give an explicit assurance on the Monroe Doctrine, and Germany and Britain could assuage their difficulties over naval rivalry and other matters. His mission an obvious failure, House became alarmed over the contrast in the military preparations of the United States and Germany; in this respect he was influenced by General Leonard Wood, the friend of Theodore Roosevelt, in favor of creating a citizen army. He too questioned the consequences of a German victory in Europe for the American position in Latin America. And, like Eliot, he stressed the catastrophe for the organized peace movement; he was interested in ultimate causes of international friction, but he discounted the ability of the United States to help in solving them unless it first strengthened its own defenses.

Considerably different were the views of William Jennings Bryan, the celebrated former presidential candidate from the Plains, who now filled the office of Secretary of State. Bryan was an instinc-

tive believer in the American destiny in the Caribbean, a feeling which earlier had found expression in his enthusiastic support of the war against Spain. His prejudices aroused against what President Taft had called "dollar diplomacy," the Secretary nevertheless vigorously assisted in tightening the grip of the United States in Middle America. But Bryan was also a crusader for world peace; here to an extent he had common ground with men like Colonel House, Eliot, and the great philanthropist, Andrew Carnegie. He had supported the Hague arbitration treaties of 1907; and his own peculiar contribution was his work for an additional set of treaties pledging the parties, in case of quarrel, to a year's delay before entering upon hostilities. Bryan was more eager than most American leaders to take a hand in stopping the war. Germany's motive, he felt confident, was as much one of self-defense as that of the Allies; with an offer of proper guaranties, to which the United States would adhere, she could be induced to withdraw from Belgium and restore the status quo to the other invaded parts of Europe.

Here lay the difference between Bryan and the rest. The Secretary convinced himself that the war could be stopped by a simple American offer of mediation. Whether or not he counted the cost of such mediation in terms of the guaranties to be given is questionable; but at any rate, he turned a deaf ear to all pleas for preparedness. He refused to admit a connection between the success which the United States might have as a mediator and the state of its armed preparation; neither did he envision the effect of a German victory in Europe on the future integrity of the Monroe Doctrine in Latin America. The utter inefficacy of his plan came out by degrees in the first five months of the war. Feelers put out through Colonel House for mediation between the Allies and Germany made no impression; the basis for such mediation was the restoration of Belgium and a mutual agreement to disarm, which were the terms thought to be satisfactory to Great Britain. If Britain and Germany could be brought to accept mediation, it was hoped France, Russia, and the rest would be compelled to fall in line. The indispensable prerequisite for peace, unanimously accepted in the United States as well as in Great Britain, was the restoration of Belgium and the withdrawal of the German army behind its own borders. But to this the Germans lent not the slightest encouragement; the military advantages they had gained were much too impressive to be yielded so easily.

It is important to bear in mind the ideas of Bryan. His sense of detachment toward the war was genuinely representative of American sentiment; the ideas expressed in the Einstein article and echoed,

perhaps unconsciously, by Roosevelt, Eliot, and House were not. There was nothing in the record of past German rivalry with the United States sharp or consequential enough to cause Germany to be identified in the public mind as an enemy. The shift that had been taking place in the world balance of power over the previous score of years had been invisible to all but the most-practiced eyes. Few gave credence to the partnership with the British Empire formed in embryo after the quarreling over Venezuela in 1895—the establishment of an American hegemony in the Western Hemisphere, the strengthening of the ties of common interest in the Orient. Sentimentally Britain possessed some advantages over Germany with the American public in 1914, at least she escaped the stain of the moral wrong which could not be erased from the German record. The invasion of Belgium had left a fixed impression on the American mentality. But ancient animosities are not yielded easily, the original grudge against the mother country still possessed vitality, and talk of England's "wrongs" could be used to silence indignation against German cruelty.

In 1914, moreover, the Anglo-American partnership was still scarcely more than embryonic. The British Empire had absorbed the main shocks of German aggression; the United States had felt only faint tremors. There was little awareness of a common bond of interest between the two in the Atlantic, since the disappearance of France as a menace to the integrity of the New World, the essential conservatism of the British attitude, its concurrence in the spread of American influence, had remained unrecognized. Far from motivating an American program of action in 1914, in common with that of Great Britain, British sea power raised up the specter of a possible enemy. The creed of the United States was freedom of the seas. The only actual involvement this country had ever suffered in a general European war—that of 1812—was believed to have been brought on by the British violation of this principle.

It was the recollection of the entanglement with England of a century before that weighed most heavily on the mind of the President. Wilson believed himself to be in Madison's shoes and saw the war in 1914, so far as the United States was concerned, chiefly in terms of the traditional pattern of neutral rights. He had certain general impressions of German aggressiveness; he shared the current anger against the attack on Belgium; and, like Dr. Eliot, he was a deep admirer of English and a sharp critic of German political institutions and culture. He even reflected on Eliot's suggestion of making common cause with the enemies of Germany. To follow

such a course was not in the least practicable, however. It was too violent a departure from American traditions. Furthermore, Wilson was less easily convinced than Eliot that Germany could win a sweeping victory. In common with the overwhelming majority of his countrymen, the President's choice was neutrality, he believed a long war would exhaust Germany and leave her a prey to Russia; and his immediate concern—a most grievous one—was lest the United States slip into a quarrel with the British over neutral rights from which it could not withdraw.

These, then, were the general impressions on which the American policy of neutrality in 1914 was based—a disbelief in the danger of a German victory, some foreboding of trouble with England on the high seas, and a hope of helping to make the peace if and when the opportunity offered. The underlying conception of a peace was of one without victory—the evacuation of invaded territories. Particularly was the restoration of Belgium uppermost in the American mind. Since the Central Powers were the invaders, the American idea called first for sacrifices from them. Once these were made, it was felt that steps should be taken toward a more secure peace, and this involved a general disarmament on land and an agreement with Great Britain with reference to the doctrine of freedom of the seas.

No attempt was made at the time to define the problem of disarmament, but on freedom of the seas American opinion had the benefit of historical experience, not to mention the international code of maritime warfare drawn up, though not ratified, five years previously. By freedom of the seas American leaders meant freedom of private property from capture on the high seas. They had in mind limited and definite lists of contraband, such as the Declaration of London in 1909 had designated; and they had little conception of the revolutionary effects the conflict just starting was to have on the traditional rules of maritime warfare.

Attempts at progress in the general direction thus outlined met with absolutely no success. No one but Bryan was eager to rush in with offers of mediation without some advance diplomatic preparation; and a visit of inquiry to Europe by Colonel House proved fruitless. The Germans declined to encourage the hope that they would withdraw from Belgium. Naturally, serious peace-making halted at this point.

The chief thing to be explained is the reversal that took place in American foreign policy between August 1914 and April 1917. The picture is a blurred one. The several sections of the country varied

in their reactions to the war. This was particularly true when it came to the question of the United States assuming a position other than one of strict neutrality. Sympathy for the Allies or for the Central Powers was one thing; a recognition that the United States had a vested interest in the outcome of the war was another. In general it can be said with confidence that sentiment favorable to the Allied cause crystallized early in the Northeastern states, the German and Irish minorities always excepted. From that section, too, there first emerged a demand for a positive policy, an insistence that American fortunes were inseparable from those of Britain and France, and a determination to see Germany beaten.

But the West and the South did not respond in this way. Of them the views of Bryan were representative. Division in popular sympathies was there more marked than in the East. And while the Allies generally got a better press than the Germans, sympathy for their cause tended to be canceled out by many other factors. These included: the large German minority, especially vocal in the Middle West; the traditional indifference to, and ignorance of, European affairs; the profound pacifism and reluctance to idealize the Allied cause, the anti-British tradition, a vivid part of American history in comparison to which any sense of hostility to Germany was virtually nonexistent, and the injuries, real or fancied, caused by the British stoppage of the trade with Germany. Moved by a sense of injury, the Southern cotton growers, the Middle Western meat packers, and the copper mining interests of the Far West rose with power. And while Westerners and Southerners reacted against the German submarine campaign they were loath to accept it as a cause of war. The submarine warfare never had the same vital meaning in the West and South as it did in the East. These sections were finally reconciled to war in 1917 in defense of American rights against the submarine; unlike the East they were not amenable to arguments that a victory of Germany in Europe and of the German submarine on the Atlantic would imperil the security of the United States. Hesitancy on the part of the Wilson administration over coming to grips with Germany rested basically on these real divisions of opinion throughout the country.

Doubts as to the security of the United States came first from the men who awoke to its military defenselessness. These were the advocates of preparedness, whose numbers multiplied but slowly during the first year of the war. On the whole, the sponsorship of this movement was Republican; vigorous political opponents of the President, like Henry Cabot Lodge and Theodore Roosevelt, were

its leading spokesmen. The Secretaries of Agriculture and of War were its only friends in the President's cabinet; Wilson himself was its outspoken opponent, and the Democratic majority in both houses of Congress was either indifferent or suspicious.

The influence of preparedness was confined during the first year of the war almost exclusively to the Northeastern states, and even there it encountered opposition. But a successful summer camp at Plattsburg, New York, in 1915 strengthened this movement, the quality of its recruits, drawn from the top ranks of business and the professions, attracted wide attention at least in the East. By that time, moreover, events in Europe had made their impression, and the President finally furnished the leadership on a national scale which had been so long wanting. This he did not do, however, until his annual message to Congress in December 1915; even then it is questionable whether he ever gave his heart to the movement. By adopting it at the time he prevented the Republicans from making a party issue of it in the elections of 1916; he supported increased appropriations for both army and navy, but he remained contented with the old-fashioned organization of the armed forces and broke with his Secretary of War over the issue of building a national army in place of the traditional reliance upon the state militias.

Opposition to preparedness came from many quarters. Suspicious at first, though no less hostile to German absolutism, was the organized peace movement shepherded by the president of Columbia University, Nicholas Murray Butler, and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Themselves prominent Republicans, the leaders of this movement were inclined to associate preparedness with militarism. Stimulated by the achievement at The Hague in 1907, they advocated a network of arbitration treaties as the best safeguard against war. But the German attack on Belgium was an utter negation of an orderly peace system, the success of which, it was thoroughly believed, depended on the integrity of democratic institutions. Though failing to give its whole-hearted support to preparedness, this body of opinion furnished in the long run the natural leadership in the movement for a positive policy against Germany. It advocated the formation of a league to enforce peace, the underlying principle of which was the collective use of the economic power and of the armed forces of the member nations against any party which broke the peace.

Between this group and the President there was an unfortunate but persistent lack of confidence, due probably to party feeling. On his part, Wilson appears to have received his first favorable im-

pressions of a league of nations through his intimate conversations with Colonel House, and House in turn was influenced by personal talks with Sir Edward Grey, the British Foreign Secretary. A movement for a league of nations, stronger and more popular than in the United States, took root in England during the war years. Wilson publicly endorsed the idea of a league in May 1916, but how precise were his views on this subject then or for some time subsequently is a matter of doubt. Meanwhile his relations with the sponsors of the League to Enforce Peace continued on a purely formal footing. Mutual confidence and compatibility were minus quantities, as they were even more pronouncedly between the President and the Republican sponsors of preparedness.

Both preparedness and the League to Enforce Peace were characteristic expressions of feeling in the Northeast. They clashed with a militant type of pacifism native to the West and South. Strongly religious, this body of thought scoffed at the possibility of a German menace, refused to see a difference between Great Britain and Germany, and backed its arguments by appeals to the traditional doctrines of isolation and individualism. A tower of strength for this movement was William Jennings Bryan, who, in spite of his enthusiasm for arbitration, instinctively shrank from supporting any practical suggestions to implement international co-operation. Bryan left the administration in June 1915; unimpressed by fears of Germany and, as a matter of conscience, opposed to drawing a line with that country on the issue of the submarine campaign, Wilson's first Secretary of State refused to make a distinction between Britain and Germany. His leadership converted pacifism into a fervent crusade not only against armaments but against any program of action that suggested preferential treatment of Great Britain. According to Bryan, the British economic warfare on the high seas hardly fell short of the German in its disregard for American neutral rights, indeed, the only distinction that Wilson himself could find was that the one was a war on property rights while the other was an attack on the "rights of humanity." The pacifists agreed with the President that the encroachments for which they belabored the British should not be made a cause of war; but, they kept asking, why should the United States take a different attitude toward Germany?⁸

⁸ The facts about the British interferences with commerce in relation to American neutral rights were misunderstood even by the Department of State in Washington. After the war, when the question of claims for damages arose, it developed that, with very few exceptions, the "American" cargoes about which the State Department wrote profuse notes of protest to London were not American-owned but German-owned. There was no substantial infringement of American neutral rights

Thus the pacifist movement split the President's own party. The term "pacifist," let us note, embraced a community of feeling broader and looser than a strict definition of the word would justify. In the sense in which it was used in 1915 and 1916 it approximated the meaning of the term "isolationist" as employed in 1940-41. "Pacifists" were conspicuously opposed to a forward foreign policy; but they also raised their voice against preparedness, a position which reveals some difference from the isolationism of the latter period. In Congress the Democratic majority leader, Representative Claude L. Kitchin of Georgia, and the Democratic chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, William J. Stone of Missouri, belonged to this camp. On the Republican side the spearhead of the "pacifist" opposition was the well-known reform Senator from Wisconsin, Robert M. La Follette. To a considerable extent the issue revealed sectional differences. And the old hatred of "Wall Street" inflamed the movement, when men like Kitchin, Stone, and La Follette denounced the unconcealed connection between the New York banks, the munitions industry, and the Allied governments.

Furthermore, the question of logic pressed by the pacifists was less easy to answer because Wilson, having become a convert to preparedness, failed to clarify the issue in terms of American national security. In his public speeches on the subject he studiously avoided dramatization, and refused to admit that the United States was in danger from any source. He justified his half-hearted advocacy with the conviction that he should not alarm the public; by instinct he shrank from encouraging a war spirit, and in more than one respect his point of view touched that of the pacifists. In private Wilson frequently unmasked his feelings. He spoke intensely of the Allies "fighting our war" and let his advisers know he would put no obstacles in their path. This was probably his most enduring emotion; yet he could pass harsh judgments on the British, especially after they had shelved his peace plans in 1916.

One of the coolest appraisers of German-American relations in the Wilson administration was Robert Lansing, the man who stepped into Bryan's shoes in June 1915. Lansing rated the German submarine campaign as pointing to war between the two countries almost as soon as that campaign began. At that time Lansing thought it would be to Germany's advantage to provoke war with the United States; it would give her a free hand in sinking ships; on the other

on the part of Great Britain. This subject is appropriately treated in Part III, below

hand, the United States "could not send an army to Europe," and a war with Germany might incite civil strife⁴. Considering the circumstances, it was quite natural for Mr. Lansing in February 1915 to assume the latter two conditions. As for the submarine war, he simply anticipated the German high command by two years; the latter was far from ready in 1915 for the extensive operations for which he gave it credit.

Five months later the new Secretary of State drew up a longer and more prophetic memorandum. It was after the sinking of the British passenger ship, "Lusitania," and the great diplomatic crisis between the United States and Germany that that tragedy had provoked. Now it was a question with Lansing not if but when the United States should go to war with Germany. The memorandum was a reasoned estimate of the meaning of a German victory to the United States. The threat was twofold, he believed: (1) "the German Government is utterly hostile to all nations with democratic institutions because those who compose it see in democracy a menace to absolutism and the defeat of the German ambition for world domination." Once victorious over the Allies, the German government "would with its usual vigor and thoroughness prepare to renew its attack on democracy. . . . It would probably endeavor to sow dissensions among the nations with liberal institutions and seek an alliance with other governments based to a more or less degree on the principle of absolutism." (2) Germany's success is a menace to the security of the United States in the Western Hemisphere. "German agents have undoubtedly been at work in Mexico arousing anti-American feeling. . . . The proof is not conclusive but is sufficient to compel belief. Germans also appear to be operating in Haiti and San Domingo and are probably doing so in other Latin American Republics." Their object he considered that of creating trouble for the United States at home and of preventing it from taking part in the European war in case of a repetition of such outrages as the "Lusitania" sinking. "It may even go further," he wrote, "and have in mind the possibility of a future war with this Republic in case the Allies should be defeated."

The American line of policy should be as follows, thought the Secretary: (1) The settlement of the present submarine controversy "because the American people are still much divided on the merits of the war. As it progresses, I believe that the real objects of the German Government will be disclosed and there will be united oppo-

⁴ *The Lansing Papers, 1914-1920* (2 vols., Washington, D C., 1939), I, 367-68

sition." (2) Prosecution of all plots and a vigilant watch on Germans within this country (3) Secret investigation of German activities in Latin America, particularly Mexico. (4) Cultivation of the Pan-American doctrine so as to alienate the American republics from German influence. (5) Closer relations with Mexico by recognizing the revolutionary president, Carranza (6) Purchase of the Danish West Indies "as soon and as secretly as possible because Germany may conquer Denmark and come in that way into legal title." (7) Prevention of German influence from becoming dominant "in any nation bordering the Caribbean or near the Panama Canal In this connection we should settle in some way with Colombia, for the Germans are particularly active there" (8) Active participation in the war "in case it becomes evident that Germany will be the victor A triumph for German imperialism *must not be* We ought to look forward to this possibility and make ready for it . . . We must in fact risk everything rather than leave the way open for a new combination of powers, stronger and more dangerous to liberty than the Central Allies are today"⁵

The closing sentence, assuming it to be genuine, shows how far Lansing had progressed in his thinking by July 1915 He was already weighing the chances of a German victory—something we know Theodore Roosevelt to have done even earlier—and he had reached the reasoned conclusion that such an eventuality would be intolerable to the United States Like his chief, the Secretary fell into the habit of speaking of the war in terms of a conflict between democracy and autocracy, but the real image in his mind was that of the United States left alone to face an all-powerful Germany It was a con-

⁵ The memorandum from which these extracts are taken is printed in full in the *War Memoirs of Robert Lansing* (Indianapolis, 1935), pp 19-21 There is some discrepancy in thought between the *Memoirs* and the selection of *Lansing Papers* published by the Department of State The *Memoirs* were written by Lansing after his retirement, and were published posthumously In them the Secretary perhaps consciously makes himself appear more prophetic than the actual record as found in the *Papers* would appear to justify.

Some authorities even hint that the memorandum from which I quote in the text was "doctored" with an eye to fitting into the particular atmosphere in which the book was published However that may be, the memorandum which was written in February 1915 we know to be genuine it appears in the *Papers* And between the two there is no great discrepancy of thought Lansing was by no means unique in July 1915 in thinking that war would come with Germany The memorandum of February is as precise in its way as the one of July, which may well represent a natural development of thought during the interval The Secretary was in the habit of composing precise memoranda frequently for the clarification of his own thinking Furthermore, the strong position which Lansing insisted the United States should take on the submarine question would argue well for the authenticity of the July memorandum We describe below Lansing's attitude on the submarine

ception which the President's intimate, Colonel House, also was formulating in his mind.

It was the first time that American statesmanship had been obliged to think seriously in terms of the European balance of power since the time of Jefferson and Monroe. Accustomed to seeing Great Britain hold the balance with ease, it was now ready to frame a doubt as to the future and reappraise the position of the United States. We are not, of course, to conclude that Lansing's memorandum reveals the secret of American policy after the sinking of the "Lusitania." The President never expressed himself in such precise terms, either publicly or, so far as is known, privately. But it is plain that there was a widening pool of opinion, localized to be sure in the Northeast, that would, if it had known of the Lansing memorandum, have given its vigorous assent. The driving forces in shaping this opinion came from the preparedness movement and the League to Enforce Peace.

Two main considerations underlay the growing feeling in the United States in 1915. The prime one was the German submarine campaign, begun in February allegedly as a reprisal designed to force the British to relinquish their control of commerce en route to Germany. Britain had mined the entrances to the North Sea, since the whole of that body of water was now a declared war zone, neutral ships could pass through it only under supervision, none whatever could go to Germany, and only such as were given safe conduct could go to the ports of adjoining neutral countries. The encirclement of Germany from the ocean side, the strangulation of her trade with the outside world, had barely begun; effective means of rationing the trade of the European neutrals so as to check the flow of cargoes through their ports to the enemy had to be found by trial and error. Whether or not originally intended only as a means of reprisal, the German submarine soon proved its worth as an offensive weapon, too valuable for sacrifice in return for promised concessions from the enemy. Such concessions, it should be said, were not forthcoming, the British too valued their warfare at sea as a means to victory. Efforts by the American government to pledge each side to limit the war at sea—the British to allow the passage of food ships, the Germans to respect the rules of visit and search—had to be dropped.

The original German submarine campaign was waged in the waters surrounding the British Isles. It was announced that submarines would operate only against enemy shipping and that, for

reasons of danger to themselves, they would disregard the ordinary rules of visit and search. British or French ships would be torpedoed on sight; neutrals would not be intentionally molested. Nevertheless the latter were warned of the possibility of mistakes, for which Germany disclaimed responsibility in advance; the *ruses de guerre* which the British were known to resort to, such as the flying of a false flag while crossing a danger zone, would tempt a submarine to fire at a vessel even though it flew a neutral flag. Obviously the Germans hoped to frighten neutral ships away from British shores, indeed, they freely admitted as much to the American government. A practical blockade of Britain would thus be the result.

The Germans also said they would like to see the United States follow "the spirit of true neutrality" by embargoing the export of munitions, a step which would tip the advantage decidedly in their favor. Germany's superiority to the United Kingdom in making munitions was a matter that may easily be forgotten. Wilson and his administration never had the slightest sympathy for the German proposal. Nevertheless it turned out to be an extraordinarily successful red herring; its plausibility impressed literally millions of people in the United States and helped to create a breach in American public opinion which unquestionably hampered the government.⁶ It awoke in the mind of Bryan a doubt which later became a conviction. The Secretary of State had raised no objection to the munitions trade in the early months of the war, and, of course, the imposition of an arms embargo was no part of the legal duty of a neutral.

Whether or not the German government anticipated the high propaganda value of its replies to the United States may well be questioned; but a fire was lighted under the Wilson administration which was not easily controlled. Pro-Germans naturally seized upon the argument, but the main damage was done to genuine American opinion. Pacifists everywhere made the argument their own; furthermore, it proved an excellent talking point in kindling sectional and class hatred toward Eastern industrialists and financiers. Southerners and Westerners like Claude Kitchin and William J. Stone accepted this point of view. Stone had a large pro-German constituency in Missouri to appease; Kitchin, in common with other Southern congressmen, stood aggrieved at the war prosperity of Northern industry while the cotton trade of the South temporarily languished.

⁶ See the instructive analysis of public opinion in Indiana by Cedric B. Cummins, "Indiana Looks at the World War, 1914," and "Indiana's Reaction to the Submarine Controversy of 1915," *Indiana Magazine of History*, XXXVII (1941), 307-44; XL (1944), 1-32.

Raw cotton being required for the manufacture of high explosives, its export to the Central Powers was eventually stopped by the British, but only after they had allowed the 1914 pickings to go through.

Furthermore, Mr. Kitchin recalled that the American government sometimes imposed embargoes on arms shipments to Mexico and the Central American republics; why, he asked, could it not do the same in the European war? Being more in accord with the "spirit of true neutrality" (so he convinced himself), an arms embargo would take away war profits and assist in keeping the United States out of the conflict. But Mr. Kitchin and the millions of his fellow sympathizers overlooked one essential fact: the lack of a parallel between the embargo on shipments to Mexico and the proposed embargo on shipments to Europe. Arms embargoes against Spanish-American republics served a special purpose—they vitally affected the success or failure of a given regime which the American government wished to promote or discourage. They were an instrument of policy used to foster constitutional government and bring about the defeat of revolutionary elements in the neighboring states. For the United States to follow a similar course with respect to the European war might be evidence of "true neutrality," convincing to those who wished to be so convinced; but it would thrust into Germany's hands an advantage of inestimable value. Nothing the United Kingdom could do in the way of throttling the enemy's trade would redress the balance.

But the German contention against the munitions trade was a red herring in an even larger sense. It was a specious justification for the submarine warfare. Even in their first response to the United States the Germans disclosed their hope of using the submarine to wipe out all the trade of Great Britain; they were scarcely more interested in munitions ships than in vessels bearing general cargo. They even hinted that the United States ought to convoy its own ships through the war zone, first assuring itself and Germany that no contraband was on board. In the long run the Germans were particularly concerned with food ships, Britain was far more dependent than Germany on imported food, and an effective submarine campaign could here deal a vital blow.

This was another propaganda point on which the Germans soon pressed home their advantage. The British had been the first to interfere with food cargoes. There was at the time an understood distinction between food destined for military use ("conditional contraband") and food for civilians. Not being contraband, the latter

could not be lawfully intercepted except under blockade conditions. But the British refused to honor the distinction, and thus opened themselves to one-sided charges that they were starving women and children. They used a German government decree centralizing food control as good reason for eliminating the artificial distinction between military and civilian food. In Washington the Germans insinuated they would cancel the submarine campaign if the British would stop interfering with food. The hint made a deep impression upon the humanitarian, Bryan; it left the realist, Robert Lansing, unmoved. He remarked:

If Germany could effectively carry out the [submarine] plan so as to interrupt trade with G. B., she would be far more benefited than G. B. would in stopping supplies to Germany. Germany is, however, willing to relax its policy if G. B. will do so. The conclusion is that *Germany does not expect that plan will succeed as she would never consent to forego such an advantage.*⁷

Lansing was right. Reports from Ambassador Gerard in Berlin showed the Germans had merely intended a ruse. In 1915 they did not lack food, they expected the British to refuse, but in order to escape embarrassment to themselves by an unforeseen acceptance they demanded that raw materials too be exempted from interference. The food argument, like the one on munitions, helped the Germans with American public opinion—it supplied an apology for the new type of warfare introduced by the submarine.

Unlike Bryan, Woodrow Wilson refused to be impressed by excuses for the submarine. He made an issue of it which in the long run became fundamental. The original German proclamation of February 4, 1915, announcing the commencement of the campaign two weeks thereafter, had the force of a thunderbolt; the kind of warfare the Germans proposed had been absolutely unknown since the days of piracy. It was so unprecedented, said Wilson, that the United States "is reluctant to believe" that Germany "contemplates it as possible." It broke all the rules of the protection of innocent life and property at sea. Should the German government carry out its intentions, the United States would hold it to a strict accountability and would take whatever steps were necessary to "safeguard American lives and property and to secure to American citizens the full enjoyment of their acknowledged rights on the high seas."

⁷ *The Lansing Papers* (2 vols., Washington, D.C., 1939), I, 361. The italicized words are as in the original.

Time was to prove the breadth of the President's conception of American rights. His warning did not deter the Germans, ships began to be lost within the danger zone; and the principles Wilson had invoked were put to the test. It took the horror of a great marine disaster, however, to force the issue to the forefront. It was on May 7, 1915, that the British steamship, "Lusitania," one of the largest and best-known of the transatlantic liners, was torpedoed off the coast of Ireland. Twelve hundred persons, including 128 Americans, perished with her. No other incident during the war, with the exception of the rape of Belgium, made an impression on the public mind equal to this one.

Theoretically the American government might have kept silence. Some years after the war a distinguished school of legal authority held that it should have done so. The "Lusitania" being British, the responsibility for the safety of her passengers and crew was the British government's. The established rule of international law is that all persons on board a vessel on the high seas are under the jurisdiction of the country whose flag that vessel flies. A narrow construction of the law might have justified the United States in denying an interest in the disaster—its citizens were on the "Lusitania" at their own risk. In fact an advertisement which the Germans had printed in the New York papers warning Americans not to take passage on British ships seemed to make the case for a strict hands-off policy complete. The advertisement had appeared just before the departure of this particular vessel. It looked like an instance of sheer recklessness on the part of the passengers. Horror and sympathy abated still further when it was learned that the liner's holds contained a considerable quantity of contraband.* Such cargo, Bryan protested, should not be shielded by passengers; it was "like putting women and children in front of an army." Arguments like these, not really applicable to the principles that were challenged, influenced and confounded public opinion in the United States. In the East the demand that a stand be taken was very strong; but farther inland, where the general reaction to the tragedy had been far less vivid, public opinion failed to unite on the issue of principle.

* This included 4,200 cases of cartridges for small arms and 1,250 empty shrapnel cases. Propaganda later magnified these into "high explosives." The fact that the vessel sank in eighteen minutes was good grist for this mill—skeptics began to assert that the explosions from the munitions on board caused the rapid sinking. A boiler explosion seems the sounder explanation, though the matter can never be settled with finality. The only responsible report on the tragedy, that made by a British commission, declared that the ammunition had been stored in the forward part of the vessel, about 150 feet from the point where the torpedo struck.

The questions of principle raised by the sinking of the "Lusitania," however, were already familiar to the American government. A parallel sinking six weeks before that, involving the life of a single American citizen, one Leon C. Thrasher, had furnished the administration an opportunity to debate its policy in private and decide on a course of action. It could warn its citizens to keep away from the German war zone, or it could make an issue over this one man's life. But it should do one or the other; in the face of prospective tragedies of a like character it would be fatal not to define the position of the United States. Bryan was an advocate of the first course, Lansing of the second. Wilson hesitated, but leaned to the Counselor's side. A note to Germany over this case was in fact virtually decided upon when the greater catastrophe of the "Lusitania" occurred. Silence, Lansing stoutly maintained, would be an admission of the legality of the submarine war zone and a repudiation of the original position by the United States. The Counselor was already confident in his own mind that the two countries were headed for a rupture. Germany, he reasoned, wished to make the submarine blockade of England complete. Even war with the United States would be somewhat to her advantage. An American army in Europe would be impossible; therefore the United States would be of no assistance to the Allies as a belligerent.

The position, even the basic language, decided upon in the Thrasher case was used to protest the sinking of the "Lusitania." American citizens, Wilson asserted, had an indisputable right to travel the high seas on lawful errands on any vessel, and it was the "sacred duty" of the United States to protect them. The German war zone was illegal, and the submarine should be abandoned because it could not be made to conform with the elementary rules for the protection of innocent human life. Were the question one of property rights only, the United States might be patient; but where acts of lawlessness jeopardized the lives of its citizens, it could not remain silent. For the loss of American life Wilson demanded an indemnity. But it was distinctly a "higher law" of mankind on which he really took his stand, maintaining that the German method of making war was simply not reconcilable with this. Wilson's position suggests the stand taken by Seward more than half a century earlier, when the senator from New York denounced the Fugitive Slave Law.

There is no escaping the conclusion that the issue thus created supplied the cause of the ultimate war with Germany. Bryan and a large body of his followers from the Middle West could see no fundamental principle at stake. Restless while the Thrasher case

was being debated, the Secretary resigned his post when he saw that there was no compromise between the American and the German views. To him there was no higher law involved in the right of a citizen to expose himself to danger by traveling on a foreign ship. The privileges of citizenship did not extend to the point where a few individuals could risk the peace of their country. Bryan's arguments had weight, even on the point of international law; and they brought forth a formidable demand in Congress some months later for the passage of a joint resolution that would forbid American citizens to travel on the ships of belligerent nations. The proposed resolution threatened the solidarity of party ranks—it came from the Democratic side of the House, and its passage meant repudiation of the President. It was defeated on this ground.

Both Wilson and Lansing were ready enough to agree with Bryan's conviction that the private citizen had no right to involve his country in war. On this point there was no difference of opinion. The conception that prevailed was that Germany had violated a fundamental principle of human conduct, that she was making lawless war, and that the German war zone, if encouraged or acquiesced in in any manner, meant the destruction of the principle of the freedom of the seas. Bryan argued quite logically that the British method of warfare also infringed freedom of the seas and that the United States should follow a course of equal opposition to them both. This would mean, if logic were to be the master, either war with both or submission to both. The former would be to the confusion of Britain and the triumph of Germany. So would the latter; it would invite the Germans to extend their submarine operations indefinitely, to the exclusion of the United States altogether from the seas. Championship of a principle therefore was less Utopian than the critics of the administration assumed, and could hardly be separated from conceptions of national security. The American decision in 1915 was thus framed, not according to a static conception of international law, nor yet according to a craven fear of the consequences, but rather on broad grounds of public policy.

In his conduct of the antisubmarine policy Wilson achieved some temporary success. Germany flatly rejected the charge of lawless warfare and redoubled her efforts to build a backfire of public sentiment against the British blockade. Nevertheless she was cornered by the United States into making compromises, only when she discovered that she could not win the war otherwise did she finally, in January 1917, resort to an unlimited submarine campaign. Another sensational sinking of a large passenger liner, the "Arabic," in

August 1915 forced the first compromise. On this occasion House personally took the bull by both horns and extorted from Bernstorff, the German Ambassador in Washington, a pledge that large passenger liners would not be sunk in the future without proper warning. The pledge was only partly honored for the North Atlantic, Bernstorff stretched his powers to give it, and was reprimanded for so doing, and in the Mediterranean submarine operations under the Austrian flag were not affected at all. This was the first sign of retreat by the Germans, however; and though it affected only a limited number of vessels it was regarded by them as a surrender. Wilson on his part took no such view of the matter. The German government had not met his demand, which was that it disavow the sinking of both the "Lusitania" and the "Arabic" and give up the sinking of ships without warning.

Much more important was the incident created by the torpedoing of the "Sussex" on March 24, 1916. The "Sussex," a vessel flying the French flag, was attacked in the English Channel without notice. An American threat to sever diplomatic relations brought something like the desired results: Germany promised conditionally to conduct the submarine campaign according to the rules of visit and search. Thus sudden attacks on shipping came temporarily to a close. But the Germans left the door open to a renewal of unrestricted warfare; they voiced their indignation again over the British "starvation" blockade, and warned the American government to obtain some relief for them from its pressure, otherwise, the German government asserted, it would "be facing a new situation in which it must reserve itself complete liberty of decision."

This attempt to throw the ultimate responsibility for the submarine warfare upon the American government was, of course, ignored. But in the meantime the British greatly increased the efficiency of their commercial warfare. The formal distinction between contraband and noncontraband was abolished, and virtually all American intercourse with the neutral countries of Europe came under British supervision. The German submarine warfare temporarily forgotten after the solution of the "Sussex" crisis, the Americans filled their cup of anger against the British. A system of blacklisting certain neutral firms suspected of having dealings with Germans added to the strain. But the British found it to be too valuable a tool of economic warfare to be sacrificed. By its judicious use they could cut off the trade of Germans in any part of the world through the simple device of refusing to place orders with or to permit the use of British facilities by any neutral firm that had

business with the Germans. There was little in the way of legal argument that the American government could employ against the blacklist; it was simply an exercise of the power of government to regulate the trade of its own subjects. Awareness of its legality, however, hardly added to American comfort or feeling of independence.

This combination of factors—temporary abeyance of the dispute with Germany and multiplying pressures exerted by the British which produced emotional reactions within the United States—led to mounting friction with Great Britain through the remainder of 1916. Under the dynamic leadership of Lloyd George the British now gathered themselves for a knockout blow against Germany and waived aside American proposals for compromise peace. Neither Wilson nor any of his associates intended to let differences with the British reach the breaking point, numerous expression of impatience to the contrary notwithstanding. Wilson appears to have been put out chiefly by the failure of the British government to give a favorable hearing to the peace plans that he and Colonel House had formulated; and he was far from sympathetic with the British determination to have a decisive victory. In this respect he and the Colonel differed markedly from Lansing. The State Department, meanwhile, was left with the responsibility of carrying on the various disputes with the British government; and Mr. Lansing, in drafting his notes of protest, naturally kept in mind the conviction he had already reached that time would lead to a head-on collision between the United States and Germany. He confesses:

I did all that I could to prolong the disputes by preparing, or having prepared, long and detailed replies, and introducing technical and controversial matters in the hope that something would happen to change the current of American public opinion or to make the American people perceive that German absolutism was a menace to their liberties and to democratic institutions everywhere.

The Secretary appreciated, however, the danger of a premature break with Germany over the submarine issue. "The people are divided in sentiment," he wrote in January 1916. Unlike European nations, they cannot be united by ties of blood. But, unless some other tie is discovered, he continued:

we cannot claim to be a nation. That tie is to be found, I believe, in the political principle underlying our system of government. . . . It is my opinion that the military oligarchy which rules Germany is a bitter enemy of democracy in every form; that, if that oligarchy triumphs over the lib-

eral governments of Great Britain and France, it will then turn upon us as its next obstacle to imperial rule over the world; and that it is safer and surer and wiser for us to be one of many enemies than to be in the future alone against a victorious Germany.

Since the American people would eventually unite on this issue, the Secretary was convinced, it was important for practical reasons not to restrict our own freedom of action once we were at war.

We would presumably wish to adopt some of the policies and practices, which the British had adopted, for our object would be the same as theirs, and that was to break the power of Germany and destroy the morale of the German people by an economic isolation, which would cause them to lack the very necessities of life.⁹

Meanwhile the construction of submarines and the training of crews proceeded unabated in Germany. Twice the American chargé in that country, Mr Joseph C Grew, reported on the prospects of the renewal of the submarine warfare in an extreme form. Mr. Grew's first warning was sent from Berlin on October 16, 1916, and his second warning followed three weeks later. The German navy, backed by the majority of public opinion, he said, demanded the unrestricted use of the submarine, convinced that Great Britain could not otherwise be defeated. Against them stood the Emperor, the Chancellor, and the Vice-Chancellor, and apparently also a majority in the Reichstag. As long as these latter elements held control, all would be well. But, concluded Mr Grew,

there is no permanent security to be looked for in the situation, in view of the attitude of the Navy, the Conservative Party and its allies in the Reichstag, and the majority of public opinion; and . . . our Government should therefore be fully prepared for an eventual resumption of the indiscriminate submarine warfare against commerce in violation of the rights of neutrals on the high seas.¹⁰

These warnings were received in Washington, but apparently made no impression. There is not even proof that they were read by the Secretary of State, at any rate, Mr Lansing conveyed no word to the President of their contents. Wilson was preoccupied first with his own re-election, and then with the problem of issuing a call to both the Allies and the Central Powers for a statement of their war aims. He hoped now to lay the ground definitely for a

⁹ These extracts are from Lansing's *War Memoirs*, pp. 103, 112, 128.

¹⁰ *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1916*, Supplement, pp. 300-305 and 314-18. Mr. Grew's reports were recorded as received at the State Department on November 6 and December 4, 1916, respectively.

peace conference. This was what the German Chancellor also desired, but, for reasons to be described below, the proposed conference failed, and the Germans determined to resort to an unrestricted submarine campaign. The object now was to torpedo all ships, neutral as well as belligerent, without notice, inside the prescribed zones. The German navy was confident that it could produce such a food- and raw-material famine in Great Britain as would compel that country to sue for peace.

The German announcement was made on January 31, 1917, the unrestricted warfare to commence the very next day. Zones were defined in the Atlantic and the Mediterranean, in which all ships were to be attacked. The Americans might enjoy the privilege of one ship per week in each direction from and to Falmouth, England, provided the vessel followed a course prescribed by the Germans, sailed on a schedule set by them, and carried no contraband. President Wilson was astounded, and of course the American public was caught unprepared. But, since Wilson had made his position unconditional at the time of the "Sussex" crisis, there could be but one response: diplomatic relations were severed on February 3.

The cumulative experiences of the United States with the European war produced a revolution in the country's foreign policy. The object of that policy in 1914 was to maintain neutrality; none but the barest handful imagined any course other than the customary detachment toward European conflicts. Additions to this small number grew, how fast it is difficult if not impossible to say. The sinking of the "Lusitania" stimulated additions, for American volunteers in the French and British armies were now a conspicuous factor, and opinion in the Northeast was openly hostile to Germany. Colonel House, who was in London at the time of the disaster, thought Wilson should have used the "Lusitania" as ground for intervention. Germany, he declared, now "had a better chance than ever of winning." And then, he added, "our turn would come next."¹¹ It was the sort of prescience shown by Lansing.

But the Chief Executive himself had no intention of basing a breach with Germany upon the "Lusitania." The disaster, we recall, made no profound impression on the general public outside of the Northeast. Furthermore, except for this section, it had no noticeable effect on the preparedness movement. The interior remained as pacifist and as opposed to military preparations as ever; and the

¹¹ Quoted in Ray Stannard Baker, *Woodrow Wilson: Life and Letters* (8 vols., Garden City, 1927-39), V, 384.

President declined to be a disciple of preparedness until the following winter. At the same time, however, he began to respond to the idea that he could play the role of mediator.

One of the first signs of the coming revolution in the American position was the successful floating in the autumn of 1915 of a five-hundred-million-dollar loan to Britain and France. It was a landmark in the history of American finance, accustomed to draw on Europe for considerable quantities of investment capital. One year of Allied war purchases in the United States had reversed the cash position of Britain and France; their gold reserves, very substantial in 1914, were so diminished by the following August as to be reflected in a sagging exchange rate. Anglo-French buying had concentrated naturally on munitions and the scarcer metals, like copper, the trade against which the Germans so loudly complained, but, as the war lengthened out, the normal dependence of the Allies upon meats and breadstuffs from the United States, Argentina, and other neutral countries increased accordingly. Fears for the fate of this growing trade had a double edge—a slowing up would mean disaster for the war effort of the Allied countries; it would also mean a serious business recession in the United States.

Balancing this dark picture was the fact, freely admitted by the Federal Reserve Board, that the United States was ripe for the extension of a large-scale foreign credit. The circumstances were novel, to be sure: American banking institutions, much more the American people, were unaccustomed to making overseas investments, even in peace times. Furthermore, what the Allies now sought was an unsecured loan, given on the general faith and credit of the British and French governments. Bankers and industrialists of the East were ready with the answer; but the magnitude of the desired credit required support from the interior. The idea was to sell as many bonds as possible to the investing public. A banking syndicate, headed by J. P. Morgan & Company of New York and having coast-to-coast membership, found the solution; after considerable press agitation both for and against the proposed loan, the offering with a small oversubscription was disposed of. Such evidence as is available points to the conclusion that the overwhelming proportion of the bonds went directly into the portfolios of the large industrial corporations in satisfaction of contracts. The total issue was slightly in excess of five hundred million dollars, to run for five years at 5 per cent interest.

This particular loan had political implications, though it is difficult to appraise them. At the outset of the war the administration

had publicly frowned on loans to belligerent countries. Money, declared Bryan, was "the worst of all contrabands," and Wilson agreed that the extension of loans was inconsistent with the "true spirit of neutrality." The President publicly took this position in August 1914. It was part of his program of urging the people to be "impartial in thought." It was vital to the success of the Anglo-French loan that the administration should reverse this verdict. It was not that the loan was illegal, or contrary to the neutrality of the United States; but the moral disapproval of Wilson meant certain defeat for a public subscription loan of this kind. The Federal Reserve Board, as we have noted, and the Comptroller of the Currency both indicated their support of the loan. Wilson's approval was won in secret by Secretary of the Treasury William G. McAdoo, and Lansing. What arguments they employed to bring the President around are unknown, but a cautious newspaper announcement on September 14 informed the public that the administration was friendly to the loan. It was chiefly a question of Wilson's extricating himself from the false position into which he had been lured by Bryan. For Bryan opposed loans just as he opposed the gold standard, and yet he inconsistently supported the munitions trade until he swallowed the German argument that this was contrary to neutrality. At least he could then have the satisfaction of catching up on his logic.¹²

It is, of course, impossible to measure objectively the effect of the Anglo-French loan on American public opinion. It aroused a great deal of newspaper publicity and editorializing the country over, which is what the sponsors of the loan wanted. The metropolitan dailies of the East, with the exception of the Hearst press, supported it; those of the West on the whole became converts, chiefly on the ground that the loan was good business. There is nothing to indicate that any motive other than that of the ordinary judgment of business men influenced opinion on this loan, though we must always remember that the general feeling was friendly to the Allied cause and confident of Allied victory. The Hearst press and the German-language press threw down a barrage of propaganda against it, insinuating that the Allies were bankrupt and already beaten; but, aside from again advertising the division of opinion within the

¹² Wilson, like Bryan, had an emotional bias against banking interests, New York banks in particular, which perhaps partly accounts for the naïve attitude he assumed in 1914. On two other important occasions his administration reversed its attitude on questions in which the banks were closely linked with foreign affairs. From denouncing "dollar diplomacy" in Central America and China, Wilson came to lean heavily on the banks for promoting American national policy in those regions.

country, they had no success. The Anglo-French loan was the natural coupling-pin to a highly profitable and irresistible trade.

In one further conclusion we may indulge ourselves. The 1915 loan and the beginnings of the preparedness movement were close contemporaries, and though there was no connection between either of them on the one part and governmental policy on the other, they do manifest symptoms of a definite trend in foreign policy. The same men in the Northeast were hearty supporters both of the loan and of preparedness; the names of several prominent in connection with the former appeared on the roster of the camp at Plattsburg. The 1915 loan was small by comparison with subsequent private loans to the Allies, including the Dominion of Canada, by April 1917 the total had mounted to the sum of \$2,300,000,000. *But all except the first loan were secured by collateral duly deposited in the United States and consisting of American securities owned abroad and mobilized for the purpose by the Allied governments.* Thus the insinuation, once so popular, that bankers drove the United States into war in 1917 for the protection of their own interests can have no substantial basis in fact.¹³

Coincident with the development of these positive forces was the confused feeling of indignation, alarm, and insecurity that influenced the public mind. German methods of waging war earned a reputation—not wholly deserved—for lawlessness and terrorism that had no rival. Most real was the deadly toll of the submarine war; no amount of logic-chopping about the sins of the British blockade could wash away the stains left by the "Lusitania," the "Arabic," the "Hesperian," the "Ancona," the "Persia," and the "Sussex." America shuddered over the shooting of Miss Edith Cavell, a valiant English nurse who confessed to a German court-martial that she had aided her fellow countrymen to escape from German prisons in Belgium, and, a year later, in November 1916, public indignation boiled over at the reports of the wholesale deportations of Belgian civilians for forced labor in Germany.¹⁴

¹³ The paragraphs on the loans are condensed from my article, "Private American Loans to the Allies, 1914-1916," *Pacific Historical Review*, II (1933), 180-93.

¹⁴ In strict logic Miss Cavell's case may not have been drastically different from those of German female spies who were executed by the French but whose fate met with no publicity in the United States. With one possible exception, however, the German spies were professionals, whereas Miss Cavell was a nurse who dared to take advantage of her position to help men escape. Mr. Brand Whitlock, the American minister to Belgium, interceded in vain in her behalf, and the knowledge of his efforts increased the unsavory publicity the Germans earned from the execution. In the case also of the Belgian deportations in 1916 there were some extenuating circumstances in favor of the Germans.

Barbarities, real or exaggerated, such as these left an indelible mark, though in each case it was possible for the apologists of Germany to plead military necessity. In addition, almost countless atrocity stories circulated about the Germans; many of them were the plainest falsehoods, the fabrications of British propaganda sedulously put out to the American press. These rumors merely dotted the *i*'s and crossed the *t*'s; they embittered the grim hatred stirred by Germany's main deeds of lawlessness. British writers, lecturers, and pamphleteers, on the other hand, were indefatigable in their efforts to popularize the idea of the United States joining hands against the common enemy. Every refinement of the writer's art is to be found in the record of this activity. Whatever success it enjoyed as propaganda, it fitted in with the general drift of public sentiment.

Further shaking the popular complacency and branding Germany as a foe that struck in the dark was the mounting evidence of crime committed by German agents on the soil of the United States. Not possessed of the means of intercepting the delivery of American munitions to the Allies, the Germans resorted to desperate attempts at sabotage against the munitions mills themselves and the ships that bore the cargoes. One of the earliest acts of violence occurred in January 1915 when a railway bridge at Vanceboro, Maine, was destroyed, some artillery sold to Canada was being delivered by this route. And through the following two years there occurred a succession of unexplained explosions in various steel- and powder-making plants, strikes organized by German and Austrian agents among the foreign workers, the planting of time bombs on ships, and other sinister incidents that engaged the best efforts of the American police and secret-service operatives. Between March and September, 1915, for instance, explosions on thirteen ships outward-bound from American ports and ten blasts in industrial plants occurred. These and many other outrages were traced to the German and Austrian embassies in Washington. Ambassador Dumba from Vienna was incriminated in a conspiracy to cause a strike among the Hungarian laborers in the steel mills; Captains von Papen and Boy-Ed of the German Embassy were found guilty of forging passports and plotting explosions. These worthies were duly expelled from the country; but the conspiracies and outrages continued. The greatest blast of the entire period occurred in July 1916, when a large consignment of high explosives ready for loading blew up at the Black Tom docks in Jersey City. Specific proof of German guilt was lacking in this case, but every outrage of this kind by now was

framed in the public mind with the shadows of German spies and saboteurs. In October came another jolt. The commander of a German submarine, the U-53, coolly moored his vessel in the harbor of Newport, Rhode Island, obtained a list of sailings from the newspapers which he bought on shore, and then with the greatest of ease proceeded to spot his victims (eight British ships) as they emerged from the safety of American territorial waters. Submarine warfare had at last ranged to this side of the Atlantic.

We turn back now to consider the basic change in American diplomacy from its passive role of neutrality to one of action toward bringing the war to a satisfactory conclusion. Plainly the crucial period began with the sinking of the "Lusitania," the results of which thereafter were cumulative. We have noted that a minority (but only a minority) were agreed by this time on the evils of a German victory and that they had reasoned out their position. There is good evidence for believing that Wilson himself belonged to this school of thought. According to Colonel House, he was very definitely of this mind in September 1915. House wrote

Much to my surprise, he [Wilson] said he had never been sure that we ought not to take part in the conflict, and, if it seemed evident that Germany and her militaristic ideas were to win, the obligation upon us was greater than ever.¹⁵

The expression is consistent with the thought the President had given to Dr. Eliot's suggestion of the year before. Now it seemed that the time had come to make the attempt; if the United States could introduce an effective mediation, it could be saved the risk of armed involvement. The military situation in Europe suggested a move; a great battle on the western front had ended in great slaughter but was otherwise barren of results; on the eastern front Russia had retreated far behind her own boundaries. There seemed little chance of a decisive victory for either side. Furthermore, the President was by now definitely impressed with the idea thrown out by Sir Edward Grey that the United States could effectively propose a league of nations that would act co-operatively against an aggressor. It was an idea that was often to recur in future years.

The precise plan of American mediation and the effort to steer it through to success were the work of Colonel House; and the project called for armed support of the Allies by the United States

¹⁵ Quoted from the House Diary by Charles Seymour, *American Diplomacy during the World War* (Baltimore, 1934), p. 140.

in case of certain eventualities. House was to propose a peace conference to the Allies on the basis of the following terms: (1) cession by Germany of Alsace-Lorraine to France; (2) the restoration of Belgium and of Serbia to complete independence; (3) the cession of Constantinople to Russia and the liberation of the Christian peoples of the Balkans from the Turkish rule; (4) a guaranty by the Allies not to dismember their enemies and not to attempt annexations. It was also understood the United States would support a league of nations framed to guarantee peace in the future, the league to rest on disarmament on land and the use of naval forces only in the interest of the collective peace. The latter stipulation was disguised under the ancient slogan of "freedom of the seas." Once the British and French governments had assented to the proposed conference on these bases, Germany was to be approached; if she refused the conference, the United States would probably enter the war against her, or if, having consented to the conference, she then rejected the basic terms, the United States would probably join in the hostilities. In other words, the United States was to demonstrate its good faith immediately in the cause of collective security.

Submission of this project was the purpose of the third mission of Colonel House to Europe. In after years, when it was easy to pick holes in the plan, the Colonel was to receive a shower of criticism. Indeed, from the pens of many publicists his whole personal relationship with Woodrow Wilson was held up to scorn. Yet, granted the wisdom of making some move in the direction of mediation, and mindful of the military deadlock in the fall of 1915, it is questionable whether any American agent could have offered anything more constructive. House was an executive agent of the President; and the services he performed, the personal confidence he enjoyed from Wilson, and the freedom he pursued in negotiation were hardly unique in the light of familiar precedent. On this third mission he was closeted with the leaders of the British government; but though a written memorandum was drawn up by himself and Sir Edward Grey and left at the Foreign Office in February 1916, the Colonel could win no assurance that it would be accepted.

There were several flaws in this plan. The British were already committed by certain secret agreements with their Allies—France, Italy, and Russia—to exact more from the enemy than the Americans were willing to support. In the second place, they appear to have been more confident of winning a decisive victory themselves at that time than, viewed from a distance, seemed possible. For the first time they were training a new army, raised on the principle of

universal service, and the hopes vested in this force were high. Preparedness in the United States, on the other hand, had hardly passed the stage of flag-waving. On June 30, 1916, the total personnel in the United States Army numbered only 101,000, a net increase of but 1,475 officers and men over the preceding year. This obvious lack of a war spirit in the United States gives, in retrospect, an air of unreality to the House plan. And, finally, the position that Wilson took in April 1916 on the submarine warfare as a result of the "Sussex" incident and the temporary pledges he wrested from the Germans at that time were regarded perhaps as more substantial victories for the Allied cause than the doubtful promise to back them in a conference. The Germans, it developed, were unwilling to entertain the terms that House had in mind, and any real test of the plan would have required the active participation of the United States in the war. Considering the discord in American public opinion, made still more obvious in 1916 by a heated presidential campaign, attempts to execute the plan could hardly have ended otherwise than in a fiasco.

Mr. Wilson made a second and different approach in the following December. His victory in the November election had somewhat freed his hands, though the confused issues in that campaign, and particularly his party's slogan, "He kept us out of war," were enough to counsel caution. In a general way the President understood the drift of things—continuing to be neutral would eventually prove impossible for the United States unless the war were ended. This time Wilson made a public call on both sides to state their terms. "The objects," he declared, "which the statesmen of the belligerents on both sides have in mind in this war are virtually the same, as stated in general terms to their own people and to the world." These he interpreted as security against aggression, for small states as well as large. But the President invited a bill of particulars, and from a comparison of the several viewpoints, which he hoped to get on record publicly, he expected to create an atmosphere favorable to holding a conference. He pinned his faith on appealing to a war-weary public opinion which would bear down on the several belligerent governments.

But the effort was no more successful than the House mission. The Allied governments responded with a lengthy enumeration of their demands but voiced their skepticism of the value of a conference at the time. Opinion in Britain and France had turned definitely in the winter of 1916-17 in favor of seeing the war through, a change in the British cabinet in December pointed unmistakably in

this direction. The leaders in both countries expected results in less than six months from the elaborate preparations they had made. Germany was believed to be starving. From Berlin came only a general reply to Wilson's appeal. The American conception of a peace was a restoration of the simple *status quo ante*, to be followed by a discussion afterward of the formation of a League of Nations. But to the Germans, this appealed even less than to the Allies, they were by no means inclined to sacrifice the strong military advantages they held. More than a month later Count Bernstorff accompanied the announcement of an unrestricted submarine warfare with a confidential statement of the terms the Germans said they would have been willing to grant if the conference had been held. They were distinctly the terms of a victor: restoration of Belgium and occupied France under special guaranties and financial compensation; restitution of colonies and hints at indemnities to be paid by the Allies for damage to German business—no mention of any changes in the Balkans or the Near East, not even of the restoration of Serbia. Obviously the Germans intended to use the conference as a means of splitting their enemies.

Wilson's gesture squared him with the American people. It also put Germany comparatively in the wrong. The President made two further attempts, an address before the Senate, on January 22, 1917, the keynote of which was his appeal for a "peace without victory" and for the substitution of a "concert of power" for the prevailing system of alliances, and, in February, after the opening of the unrestricted submarine warfare, a secret negotiation with Austria in the hope of detaching that country from Germany. Both efforts were fruitless. The phrase, "peace without victory," struck a sour note in Allied countries; furthermore, it was not, and could not be accompanied by any definite commitments on the part of the United States to stand by a new "concert of power" system. As for the Austrians, though they were in sore need of peace, they feared to break with their ally.

Meanwhile on January 31, 1917, the Germans precipitated matters in the manner we have already described. Barring the faint hope of detaching Austria, there was only one choice left—to get ready for war and await overt acts at the hands of German submarine commanders. If and when the attacks came, the President declared, he would ask Congress for authority to do whatever was necessary "for the protection of our seamen and our people in the prosecution of their peaceful and legitimate errands on the high seas." The important fact, of course, was that the supply route to

Great Britain was to be kept open. The President never for a moment considered warning Americans from sailing the seas. Moreover he recognized the suicide they would be inviting if they went unarmed into the danger zones. American ships might be convoyed, or they might be separately armed with naval guns and crews. The second course was chosen. A message to Congress asking for specific legislation brought the desired result from the House; but twelve irreconcilables—"a little group of wilful men," Wilson called them—filibustered the bill to death in the Senate. Their action proved to be the swan song of the pacifists; the President's denunciations were echoed throughout the country, and the unity of popular feeling which Lansing had long prophesied made itself felt in March. The revelation of a secret bid of Germany to Mexico to make common cause with her against the United States and thus recover part of her "lost provinces" of 1848 helped shake the West out of its complacency. This German move had tremendous news value. It was in the form of a cipher message from Berlin relayed to Mexico City via Count Bernstorff in Washington. British Naval Intelligence intercepted it and turned it over to the State Department on February 24. The information affected Wilson much as it influenced the public—it shook his pacifism.

Actually there was more to the German proposal to the Mexicans than met the eye. The German Foreign Office expected war with the United States; it hoped to capitalize the existing tension between Washington and the provisional Mexican president, Venustiano Carranza, and to use the latter as a go-between to persuade Japan to desert her British alliance and come in on the German side. The Germans were certainly not blind to the rift that had already appeared between Japan on the one part and the United States and Britain on the other. Two years before this the Japanese had attempted to take advantage of the European war to force China into a position of subservience, but they had been partially frustrated by the Anglo-Saxon powers.

For Carranza the German bid presented an opportunity to retaliate upon the United States for the invasion of the preceding year and to abuse, in the name of the revolution, the extensive British and American property interests in the Republic. But the chief danger of the proposed German-Mexican alliance, Mr. Lansing perceived, would be the use of Mexico for espionage by German agents and particularly the basing of a U-boat campaign in the Gulf of Mexico on a Mexican port. The German government had attempted an intrigue with Carranza to this end as far back as November 1916;

it wanted bases on the Mexican coast south of the Rio Grande and in the neighborhood of the Tampico oil fields, and it hinted broadly that it would back the Mexican revolution financially in return for these favors.

But American fears of German intrigue were not limited to Mexico. The entire region of the Caribbean was a fruitful field for mischief, not to mention South America in general. The military interventions in Haiti, Santo Domingo, and Cuba in 1915-1917 were undertaken partly for the purpose of eliminating the possibility of German bases in those islands; and for the same reason the Danes were told to sell the Virgin Islands to the United States. Additional steps were taken, commencing in March 1917. Emissaries were dispatched to Cuba and Panama for the purpose of securing the entry of these republics into the war coincident with that of the United States. To leave the gate open for German intrigue in either place would be fatal. Similar influence was exerted on the puppet president of Nicaragua and on the dictator of Guatemala; since the latter was the immediate southern neighbor of Mexico, its association with the United States at that time held a peculiar value. The weakest point was Colombia, whose memory of the American aid to the Panama rebels in 1903 remained undimmed. Knowledge of the existence of a German-owned wireless station at Cartagena, near the Panama Canal, and suspicion of a German intrigue for a submarine base in Colombia had plagued the State Department since February 1916 and had speeded its efforts to secure a treaty with that republic indemnifying it for the affair of 1903. In this policy, however, it found itself blocked by party opposition in the Senate. In all other respects the program designed to freeze Germany out of the Caribbean was executed efficiently and quietly.

Overt acts by submarines in the Atlantic throughout February and March brought the direct issue to the fore. With the sinking of the Cunard liner "Laconia" twelve Americans lost their lives, and between March 14 and 18 four American ships were torpedoed. Meanwhile preparations for war went forward in Washington. The Navy ordered Admiral Sims of the Naval War College to England as liaison officer to the Royal Navy; Sims had already openly expressed his conviction that the American Navy should work with the British. The Army General Staff worked out a plan for universal military service, and Wilson, who had neglected the cause of preparedness all through the period, reluctantly sanctioned the measure. A bill to establish selective service was drawn up and ready for Congress when that body should convene. Thus very belatedly the United

States began to prepare for full-fledged participation in the war, a program to which Wilson had given little if any serious thought. Even so, bitter opposition from a minority in Congress delayed passage of the bill until May 18, 1917, nearly six weeks after the country had entered the war. Meanwhile Allied missions, arriving in the United States after war had been declared, made known the serious military and economic predicament into which their countries had fallen. It was then at last realized that victory could be had only through the large-scale assistance of the United States.

The sinking of American ships in March was of course the direct issue. Wilson summoned Congress to hear his war message on April 2. Naturally he assumed that the Germans were already making war on the United States, and asked the legislative branch to recognize the fact. But the President succeeded in putting the struggle on larger grounds. He declared:

Neutrality is no longer feasible or desirable where the peace of the world is involved and the freedom of its peoples, and the menace to that peace and freedom lies in the existence of autocratic governments backed by organized force which is controlled wholly by their will, not by the will of their people. We have seen the last of neutrality in such circumstances. We are at the beginning of an age in which it will be insisted that the same standards of conduct and of responsibility for wrong done shall be observed among nations and their governments that are observed among the individual citizens of civilized states.¹⁶

Then followed a plea for a permanent "partnership of democratic nations" and the memorable but, in later years, much-derided assertion that "the world must be made safe for democracy." With Czarism having opportunely collapsed in Russia only two weeks previously, the President could safely and enthusiastically apply this cement to his appeal. Autocracies alone, he insisted, were the cause of war, and the spirit of the times was not inclined to question the sentiment. Congress declared war on April 6 by a vote of 82 to 6 in the Senate and of 373 to 50 in the House.

The spirit with which America went to war in 1917 was that of the crusader, molded that way dramatically by the evangelizing leadership of Woodrow Wilson. From this arose grandiose dreams of a Utopian world that was to follow "the war to end wars," dreams that of course became unrealizable especially in view of the deflation of popular emotion almost as soon as the fighting was over and of the general failure to count the cost of maintaining a "permanent partnership of democratic nations." The real objective of the United

¹⁶ Woodrow Wilson, *Public Papers War and Peace*, I, 11.

States, as shown by the manner in which it threw itself into the breach commencing in the summer of 1917, was to uphold the balance of power in the hands of Great Britain and France. After all, there was no possibility of a successful international partnership without first insuring this. Admittedly, the submarine warfare was the immediate cause of American entry; it required the direct attack on the American flag by German submarines to drive the United States into war. This was somewhat different from the loss of American life due to the sinking of British or other foreign vessels, though it is by no means clear that, had the submarines levied toll only in this latter manner, the United States would not have resorted to war. Wilson had never made any departure from his original position of holding Germany to strict accountability. Let us remember that, though the President adumbrated an uncompromising legal right, a milder stand such as advocated by William Jennings Bryan would have required the withdrawal of the American flag from those areas of the oceans that the Germans were pleased to mark off as war zones. Such a position would have been utterly contrary to the long-established concept of American security.¹⁷

Neither the danger of the submarines choking the lifeline to Great Britain nor that of the German armies trampling down British and French resistance on the western front was palpably clear in March 1917 when the United States determined on war. These possible catastrophes were exposed only after American entry. Apparently the Allies themselves were ignorant of their nearness to the brink of disaster, though they soon discovered it. An offensive begun in high spirits by the French general, Nivelle, in February ended in tragedy the following month. It was the French war mission that arrived in Washington in April that first pleaded for an American expeditionary force to fill gaps which otherwise could not be filled. And it was in April that the submarine began to demonstrate its ability to sink ships faster than they were being built.

The course of American policy between August 1914 and April 2, 1917, does not therefore supply a pattern which was duplicated in 1939-1941. And at no time during the First World War was the United States conscious of fighting a war for survival. Nevertheless, that was in a measure its object. In his war message Wilson framed

¹⁷ In 1935-1939, under the spell of a panicky desire to "keep out of war," Congress actually adopted the position advocated by Bryan. This step was the extreme swing of the pendulum in the counter-revolution attempted in American foreign policy which began with victory in 1918. It was repudiated when the Second World War demonstrated what the first failed to show: the danger of allowing Germany to undermine American security. See below, chapter 26.

Prussian autocracy in terms of a dangerous enemy to American liberty. And the formidable grip he obtained over the Caribbean countries in the months before American entry shows that he appreciated the practical value of excluding the potential enemy from a zone of recognized weakness on the American flank. Furthermore, the conception of Germany as a sinister power, with a growing reputation for lawlessness and ambition for world power, was by no means unknown to the American mind, as this study has disclosed. A small but influential minority entertained it firmly almost from the beginning. The President, we know, was aware of it and, though he consistently used his leadership against war until the submarine issue created an impasse, he was at least a partial convert to it. Finally, he made it clear that he believed in preserving an area of freedom to which Imperial Germany did not belong. Having done little to stimulate American military preparation during the years of neutrality, he had the good fortune to have the British and the French in 1917 still constituting a very strong bulwark against German aggression.

CHAPTER 23

THE PARIS PEACE CONFERENCE AND THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

WHEN THE United States entered the war in April 1917, Woodrow Wilson drew a distinction between the Imperial German Government and the German people. The quarrel, he declared, was with the military masters of Germany and not with the people. The destruction of German militarism and the establishment of democratic government in that country and, presumably, among the allies of Germany constituted the war aims of the United States. It was thought that the war would universalize democracy. Russian Czarism had already collapsed. A similar collapse of the Hohenzollern and the Habsburg systems would free Europe from the curse of centuries and foreshadow a new era of international understanding and friendship. War itself would be made a thing of the past.

The preparation of a detailed program toward this end was entrusted by the President to a body of private citizens under the direction of Colonel House. Known as "The Inquiry," this body

proved its worth both by the inspiration it furnished the President in pursuit of his general aims and by the excellence of the information it accumulated on territorial and other questions affecting the peace. It was organized in the fall of 1917, its studies formed the basis of the itemized peace program which the President publicly presented the following January; and it continued as Wilson's advisory board in Paris until the treaties with the enemy powers—Germany, Austria, Hungary, and Bulgaria—had been completed.¹ In addition to Colonel House, the moving spirits of The Inquiry were Walter Lippmann, editor of *The New Republic*, Dr Isaiah Bowman, president of the American Geographical Society, George Louis Beer, an expert on colonial questions and particularly on British colonial administration, and David Hunter Miller, a practicing New York lawyer, who, with Sir Cecil Hurst of Great Britain, did the drafting and provided not a few of the ideas that found their way into the Covenant of the League of Nations.

It was the Covenant, or Constitution of the League of Nations that made the peace system of 1919 unique. Nothing like it had ever been incorporated in an international treaty before. The Covenant was a new and basic charter of the family of nations. It rested on the principle that the entire community of nations has an interest in the peace and welfare of its various members, and that therefore a dispute or a conflict between two independent states is a matter of concern to all. American advocates of a league felt that the experience of the war had established the tie between the United States and the peace of western Europe. The German violation of Belgium and the overrunning of northern France had been an object lesson in collective security. Moreover, the formulation of definite proposals within the United States for the restoration of the map of Europe and the insistence upon the evacuation of occupied territories by the enemy powers as the minimum price of peace were an impressive demonstration of the importance that the United States attached to European stability.

Both advocates and opponents of the League acknowledged that the wartime coalition against the Central Powers had been a functioning league of nations. By 1918 the war had become well-nigh universal. Not even the few countries that clung to their neutrality throughout the struggle were left unscathed. And in proposing a league of nations Woodrow Wilson and his advisers were resolved

¹ The Treaty of Versailles was with Germany only. At the Conference a separate treaty was drafted with each of Germany's former allies; the Covenant of the League of Nations was incorporated in each treaty.

to capitalize the lessons of the war. They aimed not at a permanent armed alliance against Germany, but at an organization with certain enumerated rights to act collectively against *any* aggressor in the future. It was this conception of an organized international society acting to determine the rights of its several members and to settle their quarrels in the interest of the common safety that formed the vision of 1919. Fundamentally, and to an extent that could not be precisely foreseen in advance of its application, the idea of the League contrasted markedly with that of the state system previously familiar in some measure sovereign states should, in the interest of all, yield their absolute right of freedom of action to an organized international society. To the American mind this meant the advancement of the idea of a federal union between the states of the world, roughly comparable to the union of American states under the Articles of Confederation. It meant, too, that the sovereign United States must itself make certain sacrifices, along with the other victorious powers, in the interest of a better world. The development of an opposition in the United States to the Covenant rested on this point: an unwillingness to relinquish any of the sovereign prerogatives of the nation and a refusal to admit that American national security needed a sacrifice of this sort.

Peace-making institutions that had been much publicized in the United States in the years before the war afforded the Covenant a modest legacy. Boards or courts of arbitration and international fact-finding commissions to determine the merits of disputes had become common before 1914. Particularly was there The Hague Permanent Court of Arbitration, for the establishment of which in 1899 American diplomacy justly claimed credit. Theodore Roosevelt and his successor, William Howard Taft, helped to popularize this institution. But the field for arbitration was limited, the general rule being that each arbitration required a separate and distinct treaty between the parties beforehand. Efforts by Roosevelt and Taft to liberalize the practice by negotiating general arbitration treaties with Great Britain, permitting the governments to dispense with the requirement of separate treaties for each dispute, met with defeat at the hands of the Senate. Jealous of the power it enjoyed under the Constitution to share in the conduct of American foreign relations, that body insisted that every proposed arbitration be submitted to it in advance.

The principal handicap to international peace-making before the war, however, was the exception which all nations made of disputes affecting their "vital interests" and "national honor," concepts which

virtually barred from arbitration all questions of policy. International bodies were expected to limit themselves to findings of a purely legal character, consequently arbitration before 1914 was in the main confined to relatively innocuous types of disputes. It was here that the proposed Covenant provided a radical change. It promoted the use of all the known agencies of international peace, but it freed them from their traditional strait jacket. It was of the very essence of the Covenant that each and every member acknowledged the superior interest of the League to the peculiar dictates and selfish ambitions of national policy.

So much for the general idea of a new international order, the fulfillment of which Woodrow Wilson made the supreme objective of American policy at the Paris Peace Conference. Considerable thought and public education in favor of the idea were expended in Britain and America during the war. Wilson's sympathies for it seem to have been caught first as the result of personal correspondence with the British Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey, in 1915. A British League of Nations society headed by Lord Robert Cecil nurtured the movement during the war years, and the first actual draft of the Covenant was the work of a committee appointed by the British government in 1918. Public attention in the United States was first drawn to the idea by a League to Enforce Peace, a private organization founded in New York in 1915, which attracted leading Republicans to its fold. Both societies advanced the idea of compulsory arbitration of disputes and seem to have intended to make use of the Hague Court. As to what should be done in case a state refused to accept the award of the Court, however, there was no very clear perception. The League to Enforce Peace talked vaguely of an armed alliance of the Great Powers, while the British committee reported in favor of a period of delay following the arbitral award so as to allow passions to cool, an idea which had been introduced by William Jennings Bryan in a series of treaties he negotiated with Britain and other states before the outbreak of war in 1914. The British also favored the application of economic, financial, and even military measures against an aggressor—that is, a state which refused pacific settlement and resorted to war in defiance of its covenant. The taking of such sanctions, they held, should form a part of the obligation of each member state under the Covenant, but they made the point that the extent to which each member was bound to apply sanctions depended on its relative power and its proportionate interest in the controversy. All member states were duty bound to apply some sanctions, but varying in amounts and kind.

In general, the British report was much more definite than the scheme of the American society. President Wilson took it as the starting point for the Covenant, but the final instrument which was drafted in Paris and at length accepted by the delegations of the United States and the Allies in February 1919 was a far more finished document. The League was there conceived as a permanent organization consisting of a Secretariat, a Council (on which all the Great Powers with the exception of Germany and Russia were assured seats), and an Assembly, in which were to be represented all the members, large and small, on a basis of equality. Each member was in duty bound to apply economic and financial sanctions against an aggressor, and to the Council was given the task of *recommending* to the several states what, if any, military measures they should take.

In no small measure the League of Nations Commission, of which Wilson was chairman, resembled the American Constitutional Convention of 1787. The American delegation was very conscious of the resemblance and, like the men of 1787, felt it was experimenting with a new idea. The finished Covenant showed the influence of conflicting forces; the French, who had taken scant interest in the proposed League during the war, demanded that the League be endowed with definite sovereign powers, including especially the control of its own armed forces. The British and Americans, on the other hand, clung to the principle that each member state, having pledged its loyalty to the League, should be left to decide for itself what sanctions it would be willing to apply against an aggressor. This latter view prevailed; the idea of voluntarism, native to British and American political institutions, is inherent in the Covenant. Neither the British nor the Americans were amenable to the French plea for a superstate. On the other hand, it is quite clear that there was a strong presumption that the recommendations of the Council would assuredly be followed. Such action was to be taken by the Council, however, only with the unanimous consent of its members (barring the offending party).

In sum, therefore, the underlying conception of the Covenant was that of a permanent association of independent states bound to each other by the rules of good faith and committed to act somewhat in unison against a state which violated its pledges. The "fathers" of the Covenant intended to make use of the working alliance that already existed among the powers fighting Germany as the starting point of the League, but they left the door wide open to other states, including the enemy powers, when and if the latter could satisfy the League of their fitness for membership. Practical problems of Euro-

pean stability were not absent from their minds, as we shall see. For the French these were the only things that counted, and the proposed League had vitality in their eyes only to the extent that it accorded them permanent protection against Germany. But the British and, particularly, the Americans were bent on generalizing the problem. An association equipped to act constructively for the benefit of all the members was, they believed, a better guaranty of future peace than an alliance committed to the freezing of the existing state system. Thus the makers of the Covenant offered an organic law for the world community of states, and the success of that law depended wholly on its future application.

Wilson had outlined his peace program in an address before the Senate in January 1918. His spirit was that of the missionary rather than that of the conqueror, and he framed his proposals in the confidence that they would be as tablets from Sinai, drawing the goodwill of men of all nationalities. His confidence was not without foundation. Liberal opinion in Great Britain, mobilized largely by the trades-unions, had already demanded that the emphasis be put here, rather than on conquest; the German socialists were known to be equally desirous of reform; and the Russian Revolution had destroyed the chances of a military victory in eastern Europe. With the British government there was a general unity of purpose, though that country was hampered by the commitments it had made respecting the disposition of enemy territory in secret treaties with its allies, France, Italy, and Japan. The Russian Revolution had relieved it of its obligations to the Czar. There was a fair chance, therefore, that Wilson might achieve what he had already won in his own country, a popular front that would cut across national lines and endorse a general program of reform. It would be difficult to overstate the point that the whole American program was bent in this direction and that it called for common sacrifices, rather than from the enemy alone.

Wilson enumerated his ideas in fourteen points. In addition to the proposal for a league of nations he demanded certain long-range reforms: the abandonment of the European practice of secret treaties, the establishment of freedom of the seas except in so far as the seas should be closed to an aggressor by collective action, the lowering of tariff barriers and the promotion of equality of trade conditions among the nations, a general reduction of armaments, and an impartial adjustment of colonial claims without reference to the annexationist ambitions of the respective countries. The remainder of the address was devoted to recommendations respecting

the restoration of occupied territories and the readjustment of the political map of Europe on the basis of nationality. Belgium was to be completely restored; Alsace-Lorraine was to be ceded by Germany to France, Russian territory was to be evacuated and Poland set up as an independent state; and the subject nationalities of the Austro-Hungarian and Turkish empires were to be either annexed to the nations to which they properly belonged by virtue of common nationality or erected into independent states. The central principle was the national self-determination of peoples, with such conditions and guaranties as would make their independence possible.

The lapse of time between the enunciation of the Fourteen Points and the end of the fighting on November 11 was marked by a final German attempt to crash the Allied line in the West, a tremendous counter-offensive by Allied and American forces which pushed the Germans back toward the French frontier, the collapse of Bulgaria and Austria-Hungary, and the breaking out of revolution within Germany. Already by August the German High Command feared for the integrity of its own forces, and through its insistence the German government asked for an armistice. This was strictly a military arrangement made by the commanders in the field, it required the surrender of large quantities of German equipment and matériel, the turning over of the ships of the German navy, and the retirement of the enemy from Allied soil. The question of the Allied forces themselves invading Germany was raised, but rejected. The Allies entertained considerable fear of the spread of Bolshevism from Russia; the French people were themselves almost mutinous, and the cry of "On to Berlin" aroused little enthusiasm. Rather than embark on the uncharted task of occupying and policing the whole of Germany, it was resolved to deal with the constituted authorities in Berlin. The Kaiser had fled and the German military command disintegrated. As of November 9, 1918, Germany was a republic, with moderate Socialists in control.

The great end of Wilson's program was, as we have seen, the reform of international society. The terms of the military capitulation of Germany were left to the commanders in the field, but it was not intended to go beyond them in inflicting penalties on the enemy. Territorial changes mentioned in the Fourteen Points were designed to promote international contentment rather than to put Germany into a state of permanent weakness, there was no hint of the reparations or other penalties subsequently imposed by the peace treaties; in short, the treaties were to constitute a great charter for the future,

with the League as the functioning organization in the matter of readjustment and reform. The President depended on the weight of liberal opinion everywhere, but chiefly in his own country and in Great Britain, to carry the day for him²

The recoil to this program came first in the United States, where the Republican opposition was dominated by Henry Cabot Lodge, the minority leader in the Senate, and by the dying but still combative Theodore Roosevelt. Party politics had not been absent during the war, but until the campaign for the Congressional elections in the fall of 1918 no one launched a direct attack on the Fourteen Points. It is hard to say how genuinely Roosevelt and Lodge were opposed to a league of nations. Each had uttered vicarious sentiments at various times in favor of a league, and each highly favored the United States taking a hand in international affairs. Both were incorrigible personal enemies of the President, however, and had been openly contemptuous of his evangelism. Their ideas of a long-range program, moreover, were to make peace with the enemy first and discuss the league and reform afterward.

Their emphasis was the inverse of Wilson's. Neither Lodge nor Roosevelt intended that the United States should withdraw from Europe. On the contrary, they held that this country should guarantee the peace, that it should endorse an alliance with France against Germany, support Belgium with armed force if necessary, and stand committed even to the independence of Poland and the Baltic states. In other words, the United States should frankly recognize its ties with the security problem of Europe and act accordingly. The treaty which Wilson subsequently concluded with the French, pledging armed support in case of attack by Germany, met with the approval of Lodge. By that time Roosevelt was in his grave, but the Re-

² It is really an error to regard the Fourteen Points as a program, they were a list of principles, some of which were extremely abstract and even contradictory, one to another. By contrast, the French premier worked out a detailed program, based on the assumption that the Allies would first reach an agreement among themselves, negotiate a preliminary treaty with the enemy, and finally hold a general peace congress attended by the Germans, the neutrals, and the new states of Europe. Clemenceau's plan of procedure seems in retrospect not only logical, but eminently fair. Wilson was asked to accept the view that his Fourteen Points were to be considered principles of public law, with which practical solutions were to be reconciled so far as possible; in return the Allies were to cancel the secret wartime treaties. Clemenceau's proposals were in Wilson's hands before the President left Washington for Paris, but they were not even given the consideration of a reply. Wilson was obsessed with the notion that he was going to introduce a New Order on earth; and if the voice of experience were heeded, the world would again be cast into the Outer Darkness. See Geoffrey Bruun, *Clemenceau* (Cambridge, Mass., 1943), pp. 183-86, and Thomas A. Bailey, *Woodrow Wilson and the Lost Peace* (New York, 1944), pp. 138-43.

publican Senator continued to carry his banner high. The difference appears to have been a question of emphasis, sharpened by a bitter clash of personalities. The Lodge-Roosevelt conception of a league underlined the importance of an armed alliance and the promotion of a ring of independent states around Germany.

Wilson, or at least his advisers, likewise had this in mind. When the question of American help for France was raised at Paris, the President showed himself aware of the problem. In effect he acknowledged that the American "frontier" lay on the Rhine, the French objection that the security promised by the Covenant was too general to be of value he met by the offer of a special guaranty treaty, wherein the United States would "come immediately" to the aid of France in case of "an unprovoked movement of aggression" by Germany. A German violation of the terms of the Versailles Treaty demilitarizing the Rhineland was declared sufficient cause for France to invoke American assistance, and the treaty was to be assimilated to the League Covenant. This treaty was subsequently swamped by the quarrel in the United States over the greater treaty of Versailles, but it was of historic importance none the less.³ Its formulation shows that the American government had sensed its especial interest in the security of western Europe, and it was also the kind of an agreement that Senator Lodge strongly favored. How successful Wilson would have been with the country as a whole if he had pushed this point of view with respect to the final peace treaty is another question. The point is that he, his advisers of the American delegation in Paris, and the militant Republican leaders in the United States were in agreement on the practical issue of stopping another German attack. The difference is that the President was resolved to promote good feeling in Europe and fundamental reform to the end that the Germans would not wish to attack. Wilson advocated demobilization and disarmament, the Lodge-Roosevelt plan put little faith in reform and relied principally on armed might as the bulwark of security. It was in full accord with the French plan of heavy indemnities and the pulverization of the enemy country into small states. With these excesses left out, it is possible to see Wilson and Lodge having a common aim: they agreed on the need for the United States to underwrite a system of collective security; they agreed that Germany must not again be al-

³ Text of this document in *Congressional Record*, Vol. 58, Part 4, 66th Cong., 1st Sess., p. 3311. Britain signed a parallel treaty with France at the same time and under the same conditions, but each agreement specified that it would come into force only when the other was ratified. Since the Franco-American treaty failed, the British guaranty also never took effect.

lowed to overrun her neighbors; beyond that point, however, they parted company.

Issues in the Congressional campaign of 1918 were as usual varied: the tariff, farm legislation, government ownership of railroads, prohibition, woman suffrage, Democratic political jobbery and inefficiency, and a host of questions bearing on local interests and prejudice made up the customary jumble. Roosevelt and Lodge, the most vocal of the Republicans, concentrated on Wilson and the Fourteen Points, for the President was of the type which never failed to stir personal feeling—ridicule and vilification from some, veneration from others. Republican charges of dictatorship got a real fillip when he issued a manifesto to the voters calling for the return of only Democrats to Congress. The President's unfairness immediately had its reward: led by Taft, Hughes, and Root, men more discriminating than Roosevelt and capable of rising above personal bias, the moderate Republicans joined with the extremists and demanded that Congress assert its independence. Wilson was the kind that insists upon all or nothing from other men, and in the matter of his foreign policy it is quite clear that he was inclined to let feeling control his thinking. The evangelist in him triumphed over the practical man of affairs, and he lost the golden opportunity to bind to his cause the men in the other party who were his natural supporters. Wilson was no Washington: he was a partisan, and was unequal to the discipline of putting to good use the talents of other men whose reputation in American public life was as good as his own. His foreign policy was, to be sure, in no sense a party question, but in defiance of his own aspirations he himself helped to make it so.

The elections were favorable to the Republicans in both houses of Congress. This did not at once spell disaster for the President's peace program, since the majority of the Republicans, as events were to prove, were moderate, basically inclined to accept the President's ideas. Nevertheless, resentments had been sharpened and the extremists greatly encouraged. The crucial point was, of course, the Senate, where the struggle for party control rested on the outcome of the contest in Michigan. The victory in that state of Truman H. Newberry, whose campaign expenditures had been brazenly in excess of the limits set by law, gave the Republicans what they wanted. They now had forty-nine seats to the Democrats' forty-seven. This slight advantage gave them the opportunity to stuff the Committee on Foreign Relations out of proportion to the party's representation on the floor of the chamber. Of the sixteen members of that committee ten were Republicans and six were Democrats. But the actual

situation in the committee was still more one-sided. Being the ranking Republican, Senator Lodge was chairman, six of the other ten represented the extreme reactionary wing of the party in their opposition to both the Covenant and the Treaty. The Irreconcilables, as they came to be called, constituted less than one-third of the Republican membership of the Senate, yet they held seven-tenths of the party seats on the committee. Two others were held by party hacks, Harding and New, who generally sided with the Irreconcilables. Only one Republican on the Committee dared to stand off the Irreconcilables. He was Senator McCumber of North Dakota.

Meanwhile Wilson continued to stand in his own light. About to embark on perhaps the most ambitious and daring project in American history, he needed the combined wisdom and guidance of the best the country could offer, regardless of party or personal factors. He had long resolved to go to Paris in person and negotiate the treaty. The importance of the object to be gained justified this step, but it also required that the delegation to accompany him be representative. Root and Taft were the best-known conservative Republicans, and apparently for this very reason Wilson felt cold toward them. Nevertheless, Root exercised tremendous influence with Republican Senators, and he had committed himself basically to the program for a league of nations. Wilson's closest friends advised his appointment in vain. The same held true of Taft, who had supported the project even more wholeheartedly. The League to Enforce Peace had been the only organized body in the United States to foster the idea publicly; yet neither then nor later did the President show any appreciation of its support. Something was to be said even for the appointment of Philander C. Knox, the Senator from Pennsylvania who had been Secretary of State under Taft. Knox represented the Lodge point of view respecting a peace, yet he favored a consultative system among the world powers. Knox became one of the President's bitterest opponents on the Senate committee; Root never entirely lost his faith in a league, but he subsequently threw his influence in the direction of the Irreconcilables, Taft alone remained loyal and offered sound, though unasked-for, advice when the time came to revise the provisions of the Covenant.

This is not to say that the President selected a weak or incompetent delegation, though he ignored the Senate and the entreaties of his friends as well. The point is that Wilson's whole course invited opposition of an extreme sort, he helped to make of the whole American program one of personalities. In addition to the members

of The Inquiry he took with him the following: Colonel Edward M. House, still the closest friend and adviser he had ever had; General Tasker H. Bliss, who demonstrated qualities of high statesmanship in Paris; Robert Lansing, the Secretary of State; and Henry White, one of the few American career diplomats of that day. White's experience on foreign missions was long and extensive; he was a man of independent mind and broad vision, best of all, perhaps, he was a Republican and a friend of Lodge, Roosevelt, Root, and others. He had never been in politics however, and his name carried little weight with the party. His temperament was distinctly that of a moderator, but if Wilson hoped that White would provide a liaison between himself and Lodge, he was doomed to disappointment. White tried so to act, he became a warm and sincere advocate of Wilson's program and by correspondence he brought his talents to bear on Lodge. But Lodge, on the other hand, had expected White to go behind the President with the Allied premiers, he even wrote White a letter meant to be shown the latter and outlining the kind of peace Lodge wanted. White ignored this attempt at treachery but his own efforts at compromise were regarded as a trap by the suspicious minds on this side of the water.

As for Lansing, his membership on the delegation fulfilled the merest formality. The ultimate end of his thinking was that all countries should be made into democracies and the war problem would solve itself. There were too many legal anomalies in the proposed Covenant to satisfy his lawyer's instinct, and he rebelled against what he thought was a sacrifice of the attributes of American sovereignty. He was a fifth wheel in the delegation; too loyal to the President to side openly with the opposition in the United States, he was later quoted without permission by an indiscreet younger associate testifying before the Senate committee. The Irreconcilables on that body had no qualms about exploiting this confidential division of opinion between the President and his Secretary.

The Paris Peace Conference was the largest gathering of its kind in the history of the world. Its major functions were to make peace with Germany and her defeated allies and to provide for a new type of international society. The Fourteen Points constituted its basic agenda, having been made so by an agreement entered into by the United States, Britain, France, and Germany prior to the conclusion of the Armistice of November 11. It was one thing, however, to subscribe to a general set of principles; it was another to square these with the conflicting desires and interests not only of

Britain and France but also of the various British Dominions and of the two other major powers which had contended against Germany, to wit, Italy and Japan. Then there was a host of claims raised by the ambitious nationalities of Central and Eastern Europe, each of which desired recognition of its independence and determination of its boundaries according to what it believed would be to its own best advantage. The Austro-Hungarian Empire, pivoting on the Danube River, had formerly given unity to Central Europe; in its place were now only the two small central states, Austria and Hungary, each torn by revolution, and a cluster of Slavic peoples—the Czechs, Slovaks, Poles, and others in the north, the Rumanians, Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes in the south and east. It was this part of Europe which proved the most difficult to reconstruct.

Wilson and the American delegation took a signal part in the solution of all these and other problems. Their influence was exerted in the direction of a stable system of independent states in Central Europe based primarily on the principle of self-determination. The delineation of the boundaries of Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Jugoslavia, for example, was to no mean degree the work of the experts who were members of The Inquiry; the determination to create a corridor through German territory for Poland was reached upon the recommendation of qualified persons on that body. It was here that the Wilsonian principle of the right of a free people to access to the sea was actually applied.

The limits of this case study, however, do not call for a detailed narrative of these problems. This is not a history of the Peace Conference. Mention of these matters is included only to convey some slight impression of the immensity of the undertaking and of the breadth of interest which the American delegation showed in questions having no immediate bearing on the United States. Beyond a doubt the purpose was to exercise an impartial and intelligent influence upon a situation where otherwise there could have been no constructive guidance. In a region where there were so many contending rivalries and inherited animosities, where the only established leadership—that of the Habsburg monarchy—had been destroyed, it was necessary for someone to step into the breach. The Allies and the United States filled this role.*

We shall here sketch only those leading problems of the Conference that directly affected American interest. These were: (1)

*The official American records of the Conference are in process of being published by the Department of State. Eleven or more volumes are projected, of which Vols. I-IV, VII, and XI have thus far appeared. See *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States. Paris Peace Conference, 1919.*

the question of the security of France against another German attack; (2) the imposition of reparations on Germany; (3) the disposition of the German colonies; (4) two issues raised by the Japanese, that of the recognition by the white nations of the principle of racial equality and that of who should succeed to the German rights in the Chinese province of Shantung; and (5) the annexationist claims of Italy.

All five of these problems were inseparable from the issue of the League of Nations. What should the Conference do first: write the Covenant of the League or negotiate with Germany? The French premier, Clemenceau, was bent on having the treaty first and talking about the League later. The security of France was his one great passion. This could be realized in the following manner: the conversion of the German Reich into a loose federation of states such as had prevailed before the days of Bismarck, the establishment of a Rhineland Republic bound to France by military and economic agreements; and the imposition of additional burdens, including reparations, upon Germany, the Rhineland to be specifically exempted.

It was Wilson's province to offer France the League as a substitute. Something was to be said for the French thesis that it was more practical to settle the treaty terms before forming an association of nations. But it was of the very essence of the proposed Covenant that it supply a system of collective security in place of an armed alliance against and partition of the defeated enemy. Clemenceau was hard to convince; he had already prejudged Wilson's ideas as Utopian. But clearly the French program could not be harmonized with the Fourteen Points, which the French government had agreed to make the starting point for the peace. An American threat to withdraw and make a separate treaty with Germany brought the desired concession; France was in no condition to take her chances with the enemy alone again. Clemenceau was seemingly reconciled by the argument set forth by Colonel House that, under the League, Great Britain and the United States would surely come to the French rescue in case of danger, just as they had done without a compact in 1914 and 1917. Furthermore, Wilson proposed taking two steps for the benefit of France. He wrote into the draft Covenant a general guaranty against aggression, and he concurred in the special guaranty treaty, as previously mentioned. Of these the special treaty never received much favorable attention and was pigeonholed; the guaranty written into the Covenant, which aroused one of the most hotly contested controversies in connection with the entire document, merits some further explanation.

The general guaranty is to be found in Article 10 of the finished Covenant. Both in conception and in drafting it was the President's own. It is believed to have been the single original contribution made by Woodrow Wilson to the League idea; none the less it embodied the basic meaning of the whole project. It stipulates that

The Members of the League undertake to respect and preserve as against external aggression the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all Members of the League. In case of any such aggression or in case of any threat or danger of such aggression, the Council shall advise upon the means by which this obligation shall be fulfilled.

The phrases "territorial integrity and existing political independence" were adapted from the Federal Constitution of the United States, by which the states enjoy protection against external attack or against destruction of the "republican form" of government. The idea of applying the principle to an international pact seems to have been first conceived in 1914, when Colonel House opened conversations with the A B C powers of South America for a general Pan-American agreement. The aim was to provide for a general inter-American solidarity, or, as some would say, for Pan-Americanizing the Monroe Doctrine. Wilson formally incorporated the principle in the League Covenant, thereby making security against attack the common interest of all. The French problem was uppermost in his mind, as the treaty of assistance to which he subscribed shows. He agreed to this treaty at the instance of the French, who remained unappeased by the general language of Article 10; the treaty was the final *quid pro quo* for conceding their own program of security against Germany.

When the special guaranty treaty and the Covenant were sent to the Senate, the former remained undebated while the enemies of the President fixed their fire on Article 10. They did not do so until other holes they had found had been plugged, but the altercation thereafter revolved chiefly around this article. It was charged with creating an obligation to go to war anywhere in defense of the territory and independence of any member of the League, no matter how small or remote. Liberals were especially exercised because the article seemed to write a blank check for the maintenance of the existing boundaries and forms of government throughout the world, from being an instrument of progress the Covenant was held up as an alliance of the most reactionary kind. Wilson himself was unable to offer satisfactory explanations of the article's meaning; he admitted his belief that it created a moral obligation to go to war,

but he failed to differentiate the extent of the obligation, whether legal or moral, depending on the degree of a member state's interest in or connection with a particular controversy. The United States might lend its full support in behalf of French security (Wilson and Lodge both agreed that it should); but its assistance against an attack on, let us say, Persia might be of the most passive and theoretical nature.

The Covenant did not prescribe that all members use force against an aggressor. It merely gave the League Council the power to recommend what, if anything, each member should do. But it was a characteristic fault of Wilson that he seemed unable to get down to cases. Senator Lodge favored the treaty of assistance to France, a treaty which obligated the United States in a given region. Probably Lodge understood the application of Article 10 as well as, if not better than, the President—he was a hard and precise thinker in foreign affairs. But the Senator was interested in beating the work of his great enemy. Among the reservations he introduced into the Senate as respects the Covenant was one to the effect that

The United States assumes no obligation to preserve the . . . integrity or . . . independence of any other country . . . unless in any particular case the Congress, which, under the Constitution, has the sole power to declare war . . . shall, in the exercise of full liberty of action, by act or joint resolution so provide

The reservation was perfectly innocuous; it simply called attention to a formal limit set by the Constitution on the powers of the Executive. But the bitterness of the preceding debate and the context of the reservation seemed to void the whole Covenant so far as the United States was concerned. Wilson allowed himself to dramatize Article 10 as a great moral precept, again the theologian overcame the man of affairs. It was either the Covenant with Article 10 or no Covenant at all. Wilson himself made the final choice.

Article 10 subsequently impressed nations other than the United States as ambiguous. Canada particularly attacked it and employed the same arguments as those of its opponents in the Senate. The result was a clarifying amendment voted by the League Assembly in 1922 at the instance of a commission of jurists charged with investigating the article. The amendment stated that Article 10 was not designed to perpetuate the system prescribed by the peace treaties but was intended "to enunciate the principle that hereafter the civilized world cannot tolerate acts of aggression as a means of modifying the territorial *status quo* and the political independence

of the States."⁸ Six years later the United States, now under a Republican administration, proposed and successfully negotiated a multilateral treaty renouncing war as an instrument of national policy and laying down the same principle as Article 10 with its clarifying amendment, as a basic rule of international conduct. This treaty was approved by the Senate without a dissenting vote, and its most-determined advocate in that body was none other than the man who had been most vocal against the article in 1919, Senator William E. Borah of Idaho.⁹

Wilson properly made the Covenant the keystone of the entire peace treaty system. He considered that it was the solution of the security problem, and that if it were made to function there would be no need for special treaties of alliance. Wilson expected to make it work, and he does not seem to have regarded the French guaranty treaty as more than a temporary reassurance for France. Upon the President's single-handed insistence all other considerations at the Paris Conference were made to yield first place to the drafting of the Covenant. The work was done in the record time of ten days by a League of Nations Commission headed by Wilson himself. Since the several Allied governments were not ready with their demands, the Covenant occasioned no delay whatsoever in the making of peace. The Covenant was finished and accepted by the various Allied peace delegations on February 14, 1919. It was the supreme achievement of the American delegation, and it gave substance to the underlying aim of the United States in fighting the war. Its failure meant the loss of the peace.

No international constitution, however, could stand unrelated to problems of economic and financial reconstruction. At the time of the Armistice it was assumed that Germany would redeem the damage she had done the civilian population in the occupied countries. No difficulty was experienced in getting this qualification of the Fourteen Points accepted. But repair of war damage was one thing and payment of the costs of the war another. Cries for the latter drowned out almost every other consideration in the British elections of De-

⁸ Quoted by Bruce Williams, *State Security and the League of Nations* (Baltimore, 1927), pp. 97-98. The effect of this negative way of interpreting Article 10 was to water down the meaning. It should not be forgotten that the underlying issue in the Second World War was to be the permanency of the collective guaranty as embodied in Article 10. See chapters 26-27.

⁹ The first method chosen by the United States for displaying its intolerance of acts of aggression has been refusal to recognize changes brought about by force; the second method has involved a program of drastic sanctions against aggressors. See chapters 24-27 below.

cember 1918, and were echoed in France, where Clemenceau obtained a four-to-one vote in his favor in the Chamber of Deputies. One of the shrillest demands came from Premier Hughes of Australia, a country which had laid out heavy sums on the war but had suffered little property damage at the hands of the enemy. Indeed this was true to a considerable degree of the entire British Empire, whose war costs had been proportionately heavier than any other belligerent but whose claims to actual damage to civilian property were dwarfed by those of the devastated countries of the Continent. The striking effect of the general elections in Britain was to reveal the popularity of a huge war indemnity—a Frankenstein too big for its creator, the British Prime Minister, Lloyd George. The moral justification was the alleged guilt of Germany in plotting the war, and cries for punishment of the “war criminals”—the Kaiser and other German officials—were no less strident than those for reparation. Even officers of the Bank of England forsook their knowledge of financial matters and declared that Germany could afford a payment of six billion dollars a year. The total sum ordinarily mentioned was one hundred billions, which the French calmly doubled.

The reparations issue indeed cast a fatal shadow over the Peace Conference, the demands were far removed from the realm of practical statecraft. The American delegation alone kept its head in the matter and argued in favor of specifying a definite sum in the treaty commensurate with the German capacity to pay. To take the matter out of politics they proposed an international reparations commission with power to assess the damage and collect what it could from Germany over a period of thirty years. The commission was agreed upon but not the powers it needed in order to do what was intended. The British, who had partly repented of their first rashness, nevertheless were in too deep with their public to resign their claims to a deliberative commission. What both they and the French had to show, at least so they thought, was a list of claims large enough to convince the public that the enemy was paying for the war. They found an escape from their political embarrassment by including in the reparation bill a claim for redemption of soldiers' pensions and separation allowances. This would give the British countries a large cut from the German payments; it would also increase the amounts, though not the proportion, payable to France, and it would prolong the period of payment. Logically there was no ground for associating soldiers' pensions with compensation for property damage; every nation charged them up against the war. Wilson's advisers pointed this out to him, but his only response was: “Logic! Logic! I don't give a

damn for logic. I am going to include pensions!"⁷ His friend from South Africa, the casuistical General Smuts, had already won him over. This concession, plus additional concessions to the French, who refused to limit the Reparations Commission to a fixed sum or to a maximum period of time in which to impose reparations, effectively defeated the original plan to make the Germans pay only for the devastation they had deliberately occasioned during the war. With or without the Covenant of the League of Nations, the economic mismanagement of the world's affairs which was thus invited dealt a mortal blow to the principle of collective peace.

The third great issue of the Peace Conference was the question of the future of the German colonies in Africa and the Pacific. German Southwest Africa had fallen to the arms of the Union of South Africa, German East Africa had surrendered to British troops, the island colonies south of the Equator had been captured by the Australians and New Zealanders, and the Japanese had taken in hand the archipelagoes to the north of the Equator. Mr. George Louis Beer of The Inquiry had helped Wilson with the idea of trusteeship in colonial administration, having the historic example of British rule over subject races in mind. But the President pushed the idea further: he demanded that the captured colonies be made the common property of the League of Nations and be assigned to small states to administer. Though he had advanced the idea vaguely in the Fourteen Points, the subject was apparently not discussed in the pre-Armistice agreement; the Allies were not obligated to adopt his views on this matter except in a general way. No nation except Britain was disposed to listen, Australia and New Zealand particularly took the stand that the islands which they had subjugated formed a natural ring of defenses around their borders, and Smuts of South Africa took the same view of his Dominion's interest in Southwest Africa. Furthermore, the Japanese had been granted recognition of their conquests of the German islands north of the Equator by treaty with Great Britain. Wilson did not single out the Japanese acquisitions for special consideration; he proposed the pooling of all the colonial conquests of the war. Australia and New Zealand, however, were obdurate, and were joined by the Canadian delegation in the interests of Empire solidarity. The theoretical position of Wilson indeed got no support from Mr. Beer, his chief adviser on this matter.

The President rescued the principle of trusteeship only through

⁷ Quoted by Paul Birdsall, *Versailles Twenty Years After* (New York, 1941), p. 251.

the device known as the "C" mandate; the captured colonies were left in the hands of their respective captors, who agreed to respect the open door commercially, to make annual reports to the League of Nations on the internal condition of the respective colonies, and to abstain from fortifying the islands. Thus in effect a vast neutral area was created in the western Pacific, destined to remain neutral only so long as all the mandatory powers fulfilled their obligations. Little was made of this phase of the matter at the time; Wilson was interested in the problem of colonial trusteeship and scarcely at all in the possibility of the islands being used as pawns in a struggle for power in the Pacific Ocean. Nor did his senatorial enemies find anything to criticize in this solution of the colonial problem.

Much more tempestuous than the colonial question were the issues raised by the Japanese. The latter allowed the Australians to lead the fight over the colonies, and appeared to be satisfied with the results. They were generally silent members of the Peace Conference; but on two questions affecting their own position they rose, as Colonel House expressed it, with power. Japan had aimed at taking advantage of the war by converting virtually the whole of China into a vassal state. Outwitted in this ambition, she nevertheless made a particular point of the conquests she had won from the Germans in the neighboring province of Shantung. She had forced the Germans from their leased port of Kiaochow, and then had negotiated an agreement with China which gave her rights to all the previous German concessions there, with the additional right of military intervention in the province. The United States had balked her in her greater ambition to dominate the whole of China, and Wilson now championed the Chinese desire for the direct surrender of the rights acquired in Shantung. The situation was no simple one, however, because the Chinese themselves had made the agreement with Japan. Now they wanted direct re-cession of all of Japan's rights in the province.

The Japanese further complicated matters by asking for the addition of a statement in the League of Nations Covenant recognizing the principle of racial equality and equal treatment of nationals. Such a step looked like an attack on the discriminatory treatment accorded Orientals by the immigration laws of the United States and the British Dominions. It met with immediate resistance, in which Hughes of Australia assumed the lead. Though sympathetic toward the principle of racial equality, Wilson too recognized the danger of writing it into the Covenant; in fact, there were repercussions soon in the United States, where an explicit amendment to the Covenant was

demanding excluding immigration and all other matters of domestic legislation from consideration by the League.

The Japanese then admitted they had injected the racial issue into the controversy as a weapon for gaining their ends in Shantung; they next threatened to bolt the Conference unless the Shantung matter were conceded. They were willing to pay lip service to Chinese sovereignty in the province, but they insisted on retaining the rights they had won from Germany. Moreover, they could plead that here the law was on their side, inasmuch as their claims had been recognized both by the Chinese and by the wartime treaty with Great Britain giving them a free hand with German interests in the Pacific. In the circumstances, there was little Wilson could do but yield. Japan's title to the former German rights was recognized, but not the additional right of military intervention. She in turn recognized Chinese sovereignty over Shantung and promised to make over the concessions to China at a later date. She had already backed down on the racial-equality issue. The net effect was that her position in Shantung was somewhat weaker than it would have been without American opposition; nevertheless Wilson was far from satisfied and what was interpreted as his surrender to the Japanese ranked with Article 10 as one of the bitterest points of attack in the Senate on the Treaty of Versailles. Like the President, the Senate opposition concentrated on a principle affecting a distant Chinese province and ignored the potential shift in the balance of power which Japanese possession of the "C" mandates north of the Equator made possible.

German reparations, Shantung, and lastly the exhibition of national selfishness put on by the Italians at the Peace Conference were the three chief contributory factors in producing a reaction in the United States against the collective peace. Italy's demands stemmed from the Treaty of London of 1915, by which the Allies bought her support in the war with the Central Powers. The treaty gave her territories belonging to the Austro-Hungarian Empire partly inhabited by Italians; but Italy's chief purpose was to advance her frontier in the north to the Brenner Pass and to annex Trieste and a portion of the coast along the Adriatic so as to give her undoubted control of that sea. At the end of the war she found that to make the control complete she would have to have in addition the port of Fiume. Otherwise, the new state of Yugoslavia, which the Italians viewed already as their rival, would build up Fiume in competition with the more northerly port of Trieste. Fiume itself was an Italian town, but the surrounding country was inhabited by Yugoslavs. To

make matters worse, the demand for its cession was made a popular issue in Italy. Wilson was ready to yield the terms of the Treaty of London, though they could not be wholly reconciled with the principle of self-determination; but on Fiume he proposed to stand pat. The issue had no importance so far as the treaty with Germany was concerned, since Fiume had been formerly Austrian soil; but Wilson made a public issue out of it with the Italian delegation by appealing over their heads to the Italian people. The appeal had no effect in Italy, but it brightened the spotlight of publicity on the clash of interests that was going on in Paris and helped to warm the controversy in the United States. The Treaty of Versailles and the Covenant which it embodied were a political issue here long before the final agreement in Paris. The Treaty was signed on June 28, 1919; but opposition to it in the United States dates back to the first week of the preceding December, even before the Peace Conference opened. Indeed the open season on Wilson and anything that Wilson did, or proposed to do, goes back to the summer of 1918. Unlike each of the Allied government representatives, Wilson had failed to come to Paris with a united nation at his shoulder.

Partisanship of the most ferocious kind overruled all other considerations respecting the Treaty question in the United States and pricked the overcharged idealism built up by Woodrow Wilson. Cutting across party lines, nevertheless, were certain broad differences of opinion. The extremes were represented by Wilson on the one part and Roosevelt, Lodge, and Philander C. Knox on the other. Secretary Lansing's viewpoint was perhaps nearer Lodge's than Wilson's. Dating back to the period before America's formal entry into the war, Senator Lodge had advocated the destruction of Germany. His opinion on this score in December 1918 was as fixed as ever. He wrote Henry White:

It is absolutely vital that the terms of peace should be determined by the United States and the Allies first and when those terms are agreed upon by the Allies and the United States they must be imposed upon Germany. . . . The first and controlling purpose of the peace must be to put Germany in such a position that it will be physically impossible for her to break out again upon other nations with a war for world conquest. . . . Heavy indemnities must therefore be exacted. They will be so large that they cannot be paid immediately, but the ultimate payment must be secured beyond any question and cautionary towns or provinces must be held as a part of that security. . . . Nothing would so protect us from war in the future as the separation of the

German Empire into its chief component parts. . . . The League of Nations to preserve and enforce peace presents a conception which must appeal to every right-thinking man, but like many other general ideas when we pass from theory to practise the terms and details are vital. It need only be said here that under no circumstances must provisions for such a league be made a part of the peace treaty which concludes the war with Germany. Any attempt to do this . . . would make the adoption of the treaty, unamended, by the Senate of the United States and other ratifying bodies, extremely doubtful.⁸

Lodge's views were therefore identical with those of the French. Had he and Theodore Roosevelt been in power in 1918 there is every reason to believe that there would have been close unity of purpose between the United States and the Allies. The Senator had no quarrel with the President's special assistance treaty, as we have already noted. Neither did he have any objection to close and definite commitments by the United States in defense of Poland, Czechoslovakia, and other countries in the heart of Europe. Nor did Lodge protest the main body of the completed Treaty. His quarrel was with the League of Nations and particularly with Woodrow Wilson as its founder.

Scarcely less interventionist than Lodge was the Senator from Pennsylvania, Philander C. Knox. Like Lodge, Knox was impressed chiefly with the power position of the United States, to be used for the preservation of the balance in Europe. A Senate resolution drafted by him read.

If a situation should arise in which any power or combination of powers should directly or indirectly menace the freedom and peace of Europe, the United States would regard such situation with grave concern as a menace to its own freedom and peace and would consult with other powers affected with a view to concerted action for the removal of such menace.⁹

Wilson sensed this need for collective security, as we have seen, but he refused to stress it. He insisted there was a difference between the balance of power and what he called "a concert of power," and his approach was ethical. This was the point on which he had broken his lance with the Allied statesmen at Paris, and it was the basic cause of his friction with the hard-headed realists at home.

⁸ Memorandum of Lodge to White, December 2, 1918, printed in Allan Nevins, *Henry White* (New York, 1930), pp. 353-55.

⁹ Quoted by D. F. Fleming, *The United States and the League of Nations, 1918-1920* (New York, 1932), p. 68.

Wilson's own ideas were vague, and before he left the United States he had not resolved to put the League first. But appreciation of the difference between himself and Clemenceau had caused him to follow this course—without the League there could be no "peace of justice." The Covenant was the substitute for the armed alliance, and the League was to be the medium for the reconstruction of Europe.

Much closer to Wilson than to Lodge in their sympathies were Elihu Root and William Howard Taft. Taft was a sincere and enthusiastic supporter of the Covenant and did all he could to hold the American public to it, though he received precious little gratitude from the President. Root favored a moderate peace and the formation of an association of nations but was less committed to the concept of collective security even than Wilson. He would not "fight for Belgium," and he made himself a leader of the opposition against Article 10. Therefore he must be rated as further removed from Lodge in his ideas than from Wilson. As one of the creators of the Hague Court of Arbitration, Root grieved over the neglect of that institution at the hands of the President. Near to him in spirit was Henry White; both had refused membership in the League to Enforce Peace, and White had been opposed to a league of nations at the time he accepted the appointment to the American delegation. But Wilson had won White over. Personal friendships and party considerations kept White, Root, Taft, and Lodge together even during the bitterest stages of the Lodge-Wilson feud; on party matters they remained Republican. But the change in White's ideas suggests there was broad common ground between the President, Root, and the many moderate Republicans in the Senate. There can hardly be a question that greater tact on Wilson's part would have gone a long way in making a success of his program.

Decidedly apart even from the rest of the Republicans was the extreme isolationist minority, men of the past who had learned nothing from the war and could forget nothing. Their leader was William E. Borah of Idaho, for whom the League spelled the doom of patriotism. For Borah all of the Treaty was bad, because it was simply an exhibition of national greed (on which, according to him, the foreign Powers held an absolute monopoly). Quick and shrewd in criticism, but innocent of a constructive program of his own for world peace, Borah and his small band of associates were able and adroit debaters. It was Borah who read into the League Covenant a permanent alliance for the preservation of the status quo—precisely the opposite of the intent of the Covenant. His demagoguery

in the Senate and on the public platform contributed perhaps more than any other single factor to the confusion and bewilderment of the masses.

Between these "Bitter-enders," who early trumpeted their undying hatred of both Covenant and Treaty, and Senator Lodge there was scant room for compatibility. Just what kind of peace the Bitter-enders would have negotiated, whether moderate or severe, they did not say. They were bent on only one end—forgetting the war and its responsibilities as soon as possible. Their loudly expressed discontent with the wartime associates of the United States and their rough abuse of Britain, France, and Japan set them distinctly apart from the rest of the Senators. For them the war was a wholly lost cause. Whether or not jealousy and hatred of Wilson had so eaten into the souls of Lodge and Knox as to blind them to all other considerations it is impossible to say. At any rate these two Eastern Senators, who were by temperament and experience in American foreign affairs strong interventionists, formed a coalition with the Bitter-enders. The Foreign Relations Committee became virtually their oyster, together they were three times more active in debate than the moderate Republicans, and they wielded influence and power far out of proportion to their number. On their side must also be included Elihu Root, who gave them his allegiance in spirit. Two letters written by the former New York Senator in criticism of the Covenant were used by Lodge in such a way as to make it appear that their author was hostile to the League. This was a part of the game of propaganda played by the Irreconcilables.¹⁰ Money for general propaganda purposes among the people was garnered from two reactionary millionaires of Pennsylvania, H. C. Frick and Andrew Mellon, who cherished the hatred of their class for Wilson and the Democratic party. The money was solicited by a turncoat former follower of Wilson named George Harvey, and was dispensed chiefly in the Middle West, the most fertile field for a revolt against "internationalism."

The crux of the whole Treaty question in the United States was the Covenant. Wilson's enemies concentrated on this even before he had reached Paris, and the debates over the Treaty that were kept

¹⁰ There is a distinction between the Irreconcilables and the Bitter-enders. The former included Lodge, Knox, and their followers, who were willing to vote approval of the Treaty conditionally. The conditions they demanded were itemized in the fourteen Lodge Reservations.

The Bitter-enders were opposed to the Treaty altogether. They co-operated with Lodge to the end that the Treaty should be defeated, but on the question of accepting the Treaty with the reservations they voted no. There were only fourteen Bitter-enders.

up until the Republican victory in the presidential election of 1920 paid only secondary attention to the peace terms imposed on the defeated enemy. Only the Shantung issue rivaled the League in debate, and it was held up chiefly by the Bitter-enders in proof of their thesis that the United States should withdraw from the entire peace program.

The Covenant was completed on February 14, 1919. Before proceeding further, Wilson returned to the United States to discuss the matter with the Foreign Relations Committee. Neither side enlightened the other, and the net result was an open break. Lodge issued the challenge on March 3. He succeeded in getting the signatures of thirty-nine Senators to a round robin stating that it was the sense of the Senate that "the constitution of the league of nations in the form now proposed to the peace conference should not be accepted by the United States," that the negotiations with Germany should be concluded first, and that "the proposal for a league of nations to insure the peace of the world should be then taken up for careful consideration." The round robin was not a formal resolution of the Senate, but it was serious none the less. It was a public effort engineered by Lodge to defeat Wilson, sidetrack the League, and disrupt the Peace Conference. Wilson met the challenge directly by asserting in a speech that he would bring back the Treaty tied so closely to the Covenant that the Senate would not be able to defeat the one without the other. He then returned to Paris, leaving the Irreconcilables practically a free field in which to mobilize the fight against him at home. They took full advantage of the opportunity.

It is now necessary to distinguish more carefully between the reasonable type of criticism of the Covenant that developed among responsible men in the United States and the deliberate misrepresentation and misconstruction of the Covenant fostered by Lodge, Knox, Borah, and others of its bitter enemies. Moderate Republicans, sincerely convinced of the wisdom of giving the new international experiment a fair trial and anxious to reconcile the Covenant with political realities in the United States, agreed that four changes were desirable in the original instrument. These were: (1) An explicit recognition of the right of any member state to withdraw from the League. The American people would support it much more readily, they held, if the implication of a perpetual alliance were left out. (2) There should be a clear differentiation of domestic matters, not subject in any circumstances to the jurisdiction of an international body. This reservation assumed immense practical importance when the Japanese raised the racial issue. There was need for a de-

cisive provision barring the League, or any member of the League, from making an issue of the immigration or other domestic policies of any country (3) American sentiment required exemption of the Monroe Doctrine from interpretation at the hands of an international organization Mr Taft early discerned the need of this and cabled Wilson suggesting a sensible amendment thereto. Wilson himself was favorable to reserving the Monroe Doctrine and questions of domestic concern. Various draft amendments were proposed, among them being one by David Hunter Miller which combined the ideas of the Monroe Doctrine and domestic questions in one short clause. The Miller amendment provided that "Subject only to the provisions of this Covenant, the liberty of action in matters of national policy and of domestic concern heretofore belonging to the States, Members of the League, is recognized as continuing."¹¹ This statement had the virtue of generalizing and avoiding special mention of the peculiar national policy of any one group. If the Monroe Doctrine were singled out by name, it would afford an excuse to other nations, particularly Japan, to advance their special causes. The Miller amendment merely made clear what each nation implicitly understood—that the Covenant did not abrogate any nation's right of self-defence. But neither it nor the Taft proposal was accepted; in lieu thereof there was inserted a separate article in the Covenant referring to the Monroe Doctrine as a "regional understanding," an ambiguous phrase which belied the historic application of the Doctrine by the United States and drew the ridicule of the Covenant's enemies in America. Senator Lodge had no difficulty in chalking up this phrase as one more argument against the League.

The fourth reservation to the Covenant decided on by the moderates in America concerned Article 10. They preferred that it be eliminated or reduced expressly to a moral obligation. Wilson himself told his opponents on the Foreign Relations Committee that he considered it moral only, yet when the final showdown over the Covenant arrived it was this very article with the wording of which he refused to allow the Senate to tamper. The decisive battle was fought over this article, its vague phrasing open to two interpretations. Each extreme dogmatically asserted its view, the one that Article 10 made the League an armed alliance for the preservation of the status quo, the other that it was the "heart and life of the Covenant itself." The article had been the President's own idea, he assigned the League a mystic quality that had no place in a world of practical politics; and

¹¹ David Hunter Miller, *The Drafting of the Covenant* (2 vols., New York, 1928), I, 298.

the dogfight that ensued over his article proved the worth of the advice proffered by the moderates.

Article 10 gave the League's opponents their very best thunder, they used it to the greatest advantage in making political scarecrows with which to terrify the public, and League enthusiasts, men and women who like Wilson believed in it by conviction, were put on the defensive. Negative arguments told more powerfully with the great doubtful public than positive ones. It had been a crusading zeal that had drawn the American imagination to the League in the first instance; with the enemy crushed in 1918 there was no threat to the security of the United States to hold the country to its temporary wartime alliance; the war had not been explained to the people in terms of their national security anyway, nor was the League expounded with that end in view. It remained for its enemies to "prove" how the League could destroy the national safety, how it could involve the country in the endless wars of Europe, how it was an entangling alliance wholly repugnant to the advice of George Washington. The dissensions at Paris—the amazing though probably unavoidable extent to which the Peace Conference washed its dirty linen before the world—added point to what the Irreconcilables were saying. Publicity for the League was carried on mostly by the educated portions of the community—the "vocal classes," Lodge characterized them. The Irreconcilables admitted to themselves that educated Americans were heavily in favor of the League. But the campaign of malignment, hypothetical argument, and appeals to traditionalism outwitted intellectuals, who were forced into the embarrassing position of explaining away the fallacies set forth by the League's enemies. The crusade to "make the world safe for democracy" had spent its force, and the practical lessons of the war never had had much of a hearing.

It is not the province of this case study to give space to the innumerable bogies and false impressions about the League created by its opponents in America. One of the most persistent was the belief, which seems to have originated with Senator Borah, that the League was a mere tool of the British Empire. The provision of "six British votes" in the League Assembly appeared to confirm this propaganda and the plausible argument of the disadvantage under which the United States would be placed by this "solid" bloc of political power. The point was a favorite one with anti-British elements among the voters. Borah and a fellow Bitter-ender on the Democratic side even had the United States sending "its boys" to help maintain British authority in Ireland!

The separate "British" votes of course sprang from the treatment of the Dominions at the Peace Conference as virtually independent nations. The maturity of their political development and their contributions to the war effort had given them this position. Persons conversant with the separate interest and varying viewpoints among these component parts of the Empire were confident that there would be no solid unit of British votes, and the subsequent history of the League fully corroborated their opinion. But in a measure their views too were based on hypothesis and forecast of the future, and the simplicity of the argument of the Irreconcilables gave the latter the advantage.

None of the League's friends apparently took the pains to point out the votes of the subservient Caribbean republics that the United States would most certainly have in its pocket. Verily there was a much stronger potential bloc of American votes in the League than British. Seven Caribbean states, all of them either under the actual military occupation of the United States at the time or bound by special agreement to it, were made members of the League in 1919!

The Irreconcilables were disappointed in their original scheme to force a separation of Covenant and Treaty—a test vote in the Senate in June showed the majority unwilling to call in question the President's constitutional right to negotiate a treaty before submitting it. Formal consideration of the Treaty commenced on July 14, when the document was referred to the Foreign Relations Committee. The hostile majority on that body employed what tactics it could in order to drag out the examination—the oral reading of the Treaty by the chairman article by article to empty chairs in the committee room, a chore which took two weeks; the holding of public hearings to which many "witnesses" were summoned with obviously irrelevant purpose, as for example representatives of various national groups in the United States each to plead the special cause of its former allegiance. A second interview with the President in August brought to light nothing new, except accentuation of the doubts concerning Article 10. When the Committee had finished, it sent in three reports. That by the hostile ten Republicans took sharp issue with Wilson and submitted forty-five amendments and four reservations; the Democratic minority, instead of exploring the constructive possibilities of the Covenant, merely responded with a partisan denunciation of their opponents; only the independent Republican, Porter J. McCumber of North Dakota, sounded a note of statesmanship.

The Covenant is not as complete and as binding as the constitution of a state or nation. It still leaves to each nation the right of withdrawal,

and depends to a great extent upon the moral sentiment of each nation to comply with its own obligations or the enforcement of such obligations upon a recalcitrant member. It is, however, a mighty step in the right direction. . . . And, as in our American constitution, we were compelled, in order to form a more perfect union, to depend upon the right of amendment, so in this great world constitution experience will undoubtedly necessitate many changes in order to make a more perfect instrument that will work for the benefit of humanity. . . .¹²

Wilson fought the Irreconcilables with weapons of their choice. The Treaty became a great public issue, with the President pitting his forensic ability against that of his combined enemies. Assertion was met by counterassertion, while the real education of the public remained neglected. No document since the Federal Constitution had emerged from the Convention at Philadelphia in 1787 rivaled the Treaty in variety of difficult and complicated issues. But no leaders comparable to the statesmen of 1787 appeared to defend and explain the Treaty to the people. The Covenant was the crucial question; like the Constitution in 1787 it was experimental, but no composite group of men appeared who were strong enough to overcome the doubts planted by time and the Irreconcilables. Wilson went it alone, seeking no counsel from Taft or the other friends of the Covenant who belonged to the League to Enforce Peace. The President excitedly left Washington on a speaking tour throughout the West, for nearly two weeks he averaged more than two speeches a day at a time when he could ill spare the energy, and he pitched his speeches to a fervency which Borah and Johnson, the Bitter-enders who immediately trailed him, had no difficulty in equaling. The strain was too much; Wilson collapsed utterly on September 25, leaving his cause to the weak hands of the Democratic minority leader in the Senate, Gilbert M. Hitchcock of Nebraska.

Even then the loss was not irreparable. The moderate Republicans in the Senate, led by Kellogg and Nelson of Minnesota, McNary of Oregon, and McCumber of North Dakota, supported the Covenant and expressed their satisfaction with the changes that had been made in the original draft, they and the Administration Democrats, among whom were numbered many mild reservationists, commanded the two-thirds majority essential to Senate approval of the Treaty. A coalition between these two groups had easily beaten the forty-five Lodge amendments. Amendments were much more damaging to the Treaty cause than reservations; being additions to the body of the in-

¹² Quoted in H. W. V. Temperley, *A History of the Peace Conference of Paris* (6 vols., London, 1920-24), VI, 413.

strument, they would require the assent of every other signatory; reservations, on the other hand, were merely interpretations put on the Treaty by the United States alone.

Unfortunately the drafting of the reservations was in the hands of Lodge and his fellow Irreconcilables of the Foreign Relations Committee, sniffing for the slightest breeze that would waft victory in their direction. Reservations, they knew, held no terrors for the two middle groups among the Senators; if the Treaty was to be killed, it must be killed by *Wilson*. Lodge says as much in his book on *The Senate and the League of Nations*. He wrote:

I felt convinced that it was quite possible that the treaty with the reservations would be adopted by the Senate because it was obvious to me that on this final and crucial test a majority of the Democrats would be unwilling to vote against ratification. But I also felt convinced that President Wilson would prevent the acceptance of the treaty with reservations if he possibly could. I based this opinion on the knowledge which I had acquired as to Mr. Wilson's temperament, intentions and purposes. I had learned from a careful study of the President's acts and utterances during those trying days—and it was as important for me to understand him as it was for his closest friends—that the key to all he did was that he thought of everything in terms of Wilson.¹³

The Irreconcilables solved their dilemma by the drafting of the reservations. They did not succeed in annihilating the meaning of the Covenant, but they worded the reservations so as to convey an impression of ill will. Fourteen dogmatic assertions of what the United States would not do to help the League did not materially alter the American obligations under the Covenant, some, like the one on withdrawal from membership, merely reiterated what was already in the Covenant; practically all of them harked on the Constitutional prerogatives of Congress and as such their barbs were aimed more at the Executive Power in the American government than at the League.¹⁴

¹³ Lodge, *op cit*, p. 212.

¹⁴ Colonel Stephen Bonsal, American interpreter at the Paris Peace Conference and a close associate of House, narrates an important incident in his *Unfinished Business* (New York, 1944), pp. 272-79. Late in October 1919 Bonsal went to Washington at the request of Colonel House to see whether he could win any concessions from Lodge. On a printed copy of the Covenant the Senator had penciled some fifty words modifying and adding to the wording of Articles 10 and 16. In Bonsal's view the changes were chiefly a matter of verbiage, and were milder than the reservations being publicly considered by the Senate.

Lodge permitted Bonsal to take this copy with him as a sign of what the Senator would accept, and the document soon reached the White House via Colonel House. It never emerged, however, from Wilson's sickroom, where only Mrs

As poisoned arrows the fourteen reservations could do naught but hit harmlessly against the body of the League. The moderate Republicans recognized this fact and agreed to support them. So did Taft and the League to Enforce Peace. And as an anticlimax the British government, extremely anxious to get the United States into the League, later unofficially let it be known that it too so regarded the reservations. But Wilson followed the pattern that Lodge had foreseen. His ire was aroused by the fractious tone of the reservations, and he wrote a letter to Hitchcock for the benefit of the Democratic Senators asking them to vote against the resolution containing the reservations. Particularly was the President outraged by the interpretation of his own Article 10.

Wilson broke the tie between the moderate Republicans and the Administration Democrats. There were two resolutions of ratification in the Senate that were voted November 19, 1919. Against the first one, containing the Lodge reservations, the Democrats united with the Bitter-enders, who were opposed to the Treaty in any form. Borah and Johnson collaborated with Lodge in the drafting of the reservations but gave him advance warning that their faction would vote against them. The effect was a vote of fifty-five against Treaty and reservations to thirty-nine favorable votes all representing the reservationists. The second resolution of ratification was for the simple Treaty without any reservations. In this case the thirty-eight Administration Democrats found themselves outnumbered by a coalition of Bitter-enders and reservationists.

The blow was stunning. Apparently the general public expected the coalition of Democrats and moderate Republicans to hold fast, and did not anticipate the extremity to which partisanship and personal hatreds could carry the Senate. Public expressions of dissatisfaction were so widespread that the Senate decided to reopen the issue. The revelation of the British attitude also had some influence. But British compliance with the fourteen reservations was now requited by the addition of a fifteenth at the hands of the Bitter-enders, voicing sympathy for the cause of Irish independence.

Again Wilson denounced the reservations. He declared them to be a complete nullification of the Treaty and implied that he would veto the resolution of ratification if passed with the reservations. But this time the Administration Democrats broke ranks, twenty-one

Wilson and Admiral Cary T. Grayson carried on. Did Wilson inspect the paper and reject it summarily, as he had rejected other efforts at compromise, or did Mrs. Wilson, who is known to have been jealous of Colonel House, withhold the paper from him altogether?

from the Northern states joined with twenty-eight Republicans in favor of the Treaty with the reservations; twenty-three Democrats, mostly from the South, and twelve Republicans opposed it. The favorable majority of forty-nine was just seven votes short of the necessary two-thirds of the eighty-four Senators present. The only real victors in the whole course of the debate were the seventeen Irreconcilables.¹⁵

Wilson planned to try conclusions with Republicans in the presidential election of 1920. The Democratic candidate, James M. Cox, was an outspoken supporter of the Treaty without the reservations. But the President in his sickroom did not grasp the dizzy collapse of his own popularity, nor did he credit the Republican campaign managers with guile in camouflaging the League issue. The Republican candidate was Warren G. Harding, a convenient party hack from the Senate, the same who had followed the Irreconcilables so servilely on the Foreign Relations Committee. Harding talked glibly about his opposition to "the Wilson League," a stereotyped phrase used with effect by the Irreconcilables; privately he told the eminent pro-League Republicans, like Taft and Root, that he wanted the United States in the League just as much as they did. Whether they really set a value on this confidential oral statement, so contrary to the candidate's public equivocations, or whether party loyalty was too much for them, the pro-League Republicans at length all aligned themselves on the same side as the Irreconcilables. One wing of the party talked as if only a Republican victory would unite the country with the League, while the other gave it just the opposite interpretation. In addition to the isolationist sentiment proper, which there can be no doubt was on the increase, the Republicans exploited the Irish and Italian votes, each with its peculiar resentment against Wilson, and in November cashed in on the long-smoldering jealousy of Democratic rule and the multiplying complaints against Democratic regimentation of business.

The popular vote for Harding was almost two to one, and the president-elect showed his easy surrender to the line of least resistance by proclaiming in his inaugural address that the United States would not enter the League "by the side door, back door, or cellar door." His Secretary of State, the eminent Charles Evans Hughes, who had been a moderate reservationist, completed the surrender to the Irreconcilables by refusing recognition of the League in any

¹⁵ An informative account of the entire Treaty controversy in the United States is to be found in Thomas A. Bailey, *Woodrow Wilson and the Great Betrayal* (New York, 1945).

form. Hughes went to the extreme of declining to read mail addressed to the State Department by the Secretariat at Geneva; presently he overcame his timidity, but for some years his department, secretly friendly to the League, resorted to ridiculous subterfuges in corresponding with it.

Thus in the first trial of strength and skill in the fight to dedicate the United States to the cause of collective peacetime security, the honors went to the Irreconcilables. They alone had reason to be content. They had held together and fought to the end. Their opponents had never been united, a weakness for which Woodrow Wilson must bear his share of the responsibility. A plan so very experimental as the League, so controversial and challenging to American tradition, so exacting in its demands upon the intellect, required the closest kind of collaboration on the part of its sympathizers. American foreign policy had broken definitely with tradition in 1917: it had then recognized the need for collective opposition to a ruthless aggressor. The League Covenant was an attempt to make permanent the break with the past. But the Irreconcilables had beaten it, theirs was a victorious counter-revolution in American foreign policy.¹⁸

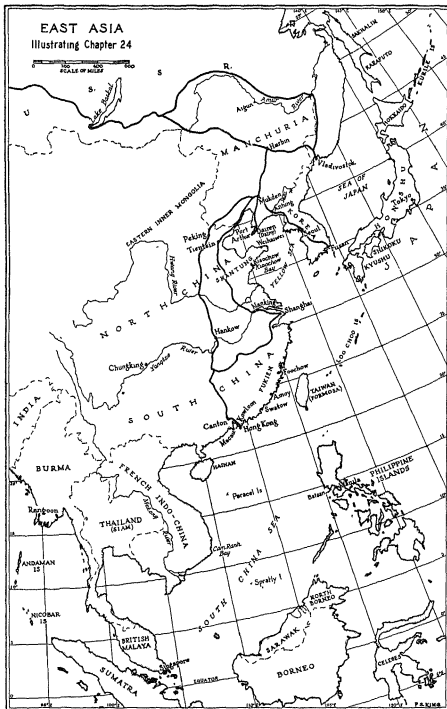
CHAPTER 24

THE INDEPENDENCE AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF CHINA, 1899-1943

THE OLDEST SYSTEM of collective security to which the United States has been a party is the treaty structure on which rest the international relations of China. The system was rooted in the competition among the merchants of the several Western nations for the trade of China, and began to take definite shape after 1842. Long-continued complaints of inequalities and personal mistreatment at the hands of Chinese officials, and also the persistent refusal of Chinese authorities to deal with Western governments, had finally brought a harsh measure of retribution. The British, the volume of whose trade bulked the largest, forced China from her cherished

¹⁸ The Harding administration in 1921 concluded separate treaties with the former enemy states, securing all of the legal rights and benefits, including a share in reparations, that the United States would have had by the Treaty of Versailles.

A horizontal scale bar labeled "SCALE OF MILES" with markings at 0, 100, 200, 300, 400, and 500.



seclusion. A treaty followed a successful war, and China was obliged to recognize the British sovereign as her equal, to cede the then empty island of Hong Kong, to pay an indemnity, and to open five ports to British trade. Since their trade ranked second in importance, Americans lost no time in securing the same rights as the British with the exception of the indemnity and the territorial provisions. The door to China was open to them henceforth to the same degree that it was to their rivals. They held a treaty guaranty from China of equal right and equal opportunity, and the inclusion of a "most-favored-nation clause" protected them against any *future* privileges that the British or other nations might secure.

In due course France and other foreign countries negotiated similar treaties and the original British and American agreements were drastically revised, additional treaty ports were opened from time to time, so that by the end of the century more than a score of Chinese coastal and river cities were available for foreign residence and trade. Even such remote inland points as Hankow on the Yangtze River were listed as treaty ports, and some nineteen foreign nations, each by separate agreement with China, acquired the same broad assurance of equality of treatment. Besides the use of the treaty ports, this included. (1) the right of diplomatic intercourse on equal terms with the Chinese government; (2) the right of extraterritoriality for their nationals on Chinese soil, that is, the right themselves to deal with their criminals instead of leaving the function of arrest, trial, and punishment of foreigners to the Chinese; and (3) the guaranty of a uniform 5 per cent duty to be imposed upon all imports from the treaty powers. Though each power made its own bargain with the Chinese, the effect was a collective system; the most-favored-nation clause, to be found in each and every treaty, was proof of that.

Moreover, the tendency toward solidarity among the foreign interests grew plainer in the course of time. Charges of corruption in the Chinese customs service, for instance, led to the creation of an Inspectorate of Maritime Customs, a commission consisting of a British chairman and two members, one American and one French. The customs administration reorganized the whole Chinese customs service and even ran the Imperial postoffice for a number of years; but it functioned as a branch of the Chinese government. Even more striking was the segregation of foreign residential areas, known as concessions and settlements, in certain of the treaty ports. These areas were commonly part of a larger metropolitan center, but the foreign residents formed a separate constituency, determined their

own suffrage requirements, elected their own local representatives, and conducted their municipal government independently of the Chinese. The largest and most famous of these communities were the International Settlement and the French Concession, each a part of greater Shanghai but forming a separate municipality with its own ordinances and its own police. Naturally it was at Shanghai, the greatest of the treaty ports, where foreign, especially British, American, and French solidarity was strongest. It was here also that the Maritime Customs Administration had its central offices.¹

With all these encroachments, however, China still remained an independent and sovereign country. The treaty rights were based on the competitive principle, and competition flourished best where no one foreign country dominated. British trade kept its lead through the nineteenth century, hence British political and administrative influences generally stood out more prominently than those of other foreigners. British subjects kept a plurality on the Shanghai municipal council, for instance. But China was far from being reduced to the status of a colony or a dependency; even British influence was limited to certain treaty ports and areas; and the healthy presence of Americans, French, and other foreigners, armed with the same rights as the British, helped to check any possible tendencies toward developments parallel to those occurring in India. The independence and integrity of the Chinese Empire were, in fact, taken for granted.

During the final decade of the century, however, a marked change began to take place. A disastrous war with Japan gave fresh proof of the military helplessness of China. The Nipponese helped themselves to all they wanted in the way of islands and even part of the mainland at the expense of the Chinese; they were forced to give back the portion on the mainland, the peninsula of Liaotung, which gave them a position from which to push into Manchuria; but three European nations brought this about, not China herself. Furthermore, the European relationship became more complicated. The older type of exploitation had been confined mainly to the treaty ports; it had been concerned with the direct exchange of goods, the rights of residence, and the introduction of Christian missions. But foreigners in the 1890's were optimistic about developing the vast interior of China, Western nations had ample capital to risk, and they awoke to the possibilities of railroad building and other forms of capital improvement with which the merchant in the treaty port had hardly concerned himself. The scramble for concessions and the earmark-

¹ The subject of the opening of China is examined at greater length in a separate case study, chapter 42, below, pp 648-58

ing of whole provinces for monopolistic development by various European nationalities, acting with the support and as a result of the initiative of their respective governments, put quite a different face on the Chinese problem after the Sino-Japanese War.

For the first time the Chinese state now appeared to be in real danger of breaking up. A British admiral, Lord Charles Beresford, possessing intimate knowledge of China, anticipated this dismal outcome. His lectures and his book on *The Break-up of China* convinced a large audience in Britain and America, and his opinions were shared by persons like William W. Rockhill, an American with a long official record behind him in China, E. H. Conger, the American minister in Peking; and Alfred Hoppisley, an English friend of Rockhill's who had served on the staff of the Chinese Maritime Customs. These men saw the older system of free enterprise in China vanishing before their eyes; and they realized that if the country were, like Africa, partitioned into spheres of influence where trade, investment, and other forms of intercourse were to be converted into monopolies for the benefit of certain European powers, the historic treaty system would be reduced to a mere legal formality. In a nutshell the problem was to rescue the established system from the evils of partition and monopoly. China must be kept independent and whole, if possible.

Specifically there were three different but overlapping phases of the China problem in 1898. The one that pressed for an immediate answer was the question raised by the leasing of certain ports to Germany, Russia, Great Britain, and France, respectively. The French-leased port and the French sphere of influence were in the southernmost provinces, an area which was on the whole noncompetitive. But the German, Russian, and British were in North China, a region fairly new to European trade and holding out high hopes for the future. At the time there was only one treaty port in North China open to free competition—Tientsin, which gave access to the capital at Peking. Germany in 1898 exacted a ninety-nine-year lease of the bay of Kiaochow and two hundred square miles of adjoining territory in the province of Shantung. Kiaochow had the best harbor in North China; Shantung was a virgin field which promised high return, and the Germans had a railroad concession which, when developed, would tap the trade of North China. If Kiaochow was built up as a German monopoly, it would weaken the treaty port of Tientsin and nullify the competitive open door in the north.

The Russian lease of Talien Bay, at the southern tip of the Liaotung peninsula, was cause for equal anxiety. The port of Dalny

(later known as Dairen), which the Russians built, was a vantage point from which to monopolize the trade of Manchuria. Russia was already piercing this huge undeveloped area with railroads from the north, and the possession of Talien Bay meant that she was certain of freedom from outside competition of any kind from the ocean side. It also pointed to naval control of the entrances to Peking. Fearful for their own position in North China, which was based solely upon the treaty port of Tientsin, the British got nominal compensation by leasing Weihaiwei, on the north shore of Shantung province and directly south of Talien Bay. Weihaiwei might prove an offset of the Russian naval threat to control the North Pacific, especially when it was linked with an alliance with the Japanese which the British were soon to consider, but it was hardly the equivalent of Dalny or of Kiaochow as a gate to the interior of North China.

Britain wanted a declaration from the other leasing powers that they would give their ports the status of treaty ports, open to all on precisely similar conditions, and she wanted the United States to stand in with her in a joint statement of policy. The United States had no leased port, but it shared the British desire to safeguard the treaty system. Yet the McKinley administration caviled at an openly co-operative declaration with Britain. The aged Secretary of State, John Sherman, was a man who believed in playing safe; he made separate inquiries of Germany and Russia as to their intentions and professed to be satisfied with the replies, though the latter were more in the nature of opinions expressed by the German and Russian ambassadors than promises by their respective governments. In 1899, however, Germany and Russia both declared their willingness to consider the leased ports on the same basis as treaty ports; but the concession was cheap inasmuch as each could manipulate the trade of its respective sphere through its railroad grants.

In the meantime the former ambassador to England, John Hay, had been made Secretary of State. Hay was thoroughly in accord with the British idea of a joint declaration, but the popular suspicion of "entangling alliances" estopped such a move. President McKinley was too conservative even for a separate American declaration until he was relieved by news that the Czar had already promised to make Dalny an open port. He then gave Hay a free hand to develop an independent American policy, that policy happening to coincide with British ideas. Hay summoned Rockhill as his principal adviser, and Rockhill was closely in touch with his English friend, Hippisley. Hippisley and Rockhill, with their Chinese background, thoroughly

understood that the independence and integrity of China were really at stake. Rockhill wished to raise this basic issue, but Hoppisley as a first step held his friend to the precise question of the treaty system. The Englishman even supplied the rough draft of the notes which it was decided to send to the British, German, and Russian governments, and Rockhill revised them.²

The Rockhill draft was almost identical with the finished notes which Hay signed and dispatched on September 16, 1899. In his note to Great Britain he mentioned the need for maintaining the integrity of China but did not dwell upon it, otherwise all three notes asked the powers to respect the treaty ports and the Chinese tariff and to give to foreigners the same consideration in the matter of harbor dues and railroad rates in their respective spheres as to themselves. He also instituted a co-operative policy of his own by asking each government on its part to aid him in persuading the other two governments to accept the stipulations of his note.

If the powers had agreed to co-operate in the spirit of Hay's request, and if they had answered his stipulations directly, much progress would have been made in modernizing and maintaining the open door. But this was hardly the result. Each said it would do what the others would do, but none offered to assist Hay in obtaining a common result. None, not even Great Britain, answered Hay's queries directly; and Russia limited her reply to repeating the empty declaration of the previous month making Dalny a free port. This was cold comfort, since practical exclusion or discrimination could as easily be effected by means of port dues and rail rates.

Clearly the open-door notes were far from securing the open door, though it was essential that the United States make some move to safeguard the treaty system or lose its position and its trade altogether. Let it be recalled that the United States had been a prime mover in the original treaties. Furthermore, far from discounting the future prospects of the China trade, American leaders of the day put on rose-colored glasses when dreaming of the part American industry was to play in the modernization of China. The conquest of the Philippines had brought them a fresh awareness of the Far East. Domestic politics probably prevented Hay from going further than he did in 1899: the presidential year was not far away, and the Philippine issue was a hot one. How much hotter the China issue could have been had Hay issued a direct challenge to the other powers or even if he had gone in with Great Britain! But the Secretary

² Notes were sent also to France, Italy, and Japan, but their replies did not bear the same practical importance as those of the other three.

sidestepped these risks and, so far as home politics were concerned, turned a rebuff into an apparent diplomatic victory. He announced his satisfaction with the replies and behaved as though the powers had all agreed to his declaration, which they certainly had not. The China problem in 1900 was substantially where it had been the year before.

Hay appears to have done the Republican party a service. But that was incidental. He made a fine gesture toward bringing the open door up to date, but the China problem was far too complex to be unraveled so easily. Nothing was solved, but nothing was lost. Hay's notes lived up to the American tradition and they met the minimum requirements of American interest. Those interests were to safeguard, if possible, without recourse to threats, the established treaty structure in China. The United States was without a leased port or a sphere of influence; its traditions and the efficiency of its expanding industry and finance favored the competitive system; and to remain wholly passive while the European Continental powers made a mockery of the treaties would have been out of accord with American policy. Hay did the least that could be done.³

The Chinese problem, however, was sure to receive deeper probing than Hay was able to give it in 1899. The treaty system, as stated before, was designed primarily to provide for competition at the

³This is one of the controversial questions among students of American foreign policy. Hay's critics depict him as an "Anglophile" and bewail his supposed readiness to "pull British chestnuts from the fire." They also mistakenly attribute the open-door policy to the spread-eagleism of the '90's and to the exaggerated ideas of American businessmen of the fabulous riches to be got from China.

There is a veneer of evidence to support the "British chestnut" theory. Hay's known liking for the English, his exposure to British ideas while ambassador, the barnstorming tour of Lord Charles Beresford through the United States to arouse the people to action, and above all the influence of Alfred Hoppisley on Rockhill and Hay. But Hoppisley, of course, was a former Chinese civil servant, acting so far as is known upon his own initiative. No one has ever been able to show that he was in touch with the British government. In other words there was no direct bridge between London and Washington; and indeed Hay's note got a mixed reception in London.

Probably Hoppisley was moved by his own personal attachment to the treaty system, which he himself had helped administer. Probably, too, Rockhill was influenced by similar motives, though he was more aggressive-minded than Hoppisley. He felt the United States should hold the balance of power in Eastern Asia, and was some years in advance of his time.

Isolationist prejudices in America kept Hay from active collaboration with the British government. There was no collaboration and no real success. So involved a question called for the most careful diplomatic preparation in advance. Hay's notes merely put the United States on record as advocating a cause which it had fostered from the beginning. The spirit of the '90's and the conquests of the Spanish War to be sure helped focus the popular attention on the Far East, but they did not originate an American demand for an open door.

Treaty ports. It rested implicitly on the principle of Chinese independence and integrity. Prior to the late 1890's no one seriously questioned that principle. But the segmentation of the country into economic spheres of influence—the French in the southern provinces, the British in the valley of the Yangtze, the Germans in Shantung, and the Russians in Manchuria—was a different matter. The spheres were intended as regions for investment and development at the hands of the nationals of the respective powers; they were earmarked by agreement between the Chinese and the four European governments, it being understood that, whenever railway or other capital improvements seemed desirable in a given sphere, the preference would go to the citizens of the country identified with that sphere. The Chinese were merely nominal parties to the agreements; they were as reluctant to admit Occidentals as they had been in 1842. But they felt it futile to resist, and a mad uprising in North China in 1900 on the part of the Boxer societies further bared China's impotence.

The Boxers represented the first stirrings of Chinese nationalism, a blind surge against the hated foreigners on the part of the masses led by a secret society with the encouragement of the dynasty at Peking. The Boxers isolated all foreigners in North China and forced them to take refuge behind the walls of the foreign legations in Peking. Many scattered murders of foreigners and a desperate siege of the legations occurred before the foreign powers landed a relief expedition at Tientsin which fought its way through to the rescue. With much bloodshed the Boxers were dispersed, then a reckoning with the Chinese government was made, which included an indemnity of three hundred million dollars and the grant of a right to each of the foreign powers, the United States included, to station troops at Peking and Tientsin and guard the route between the two cities. Forty years later an American armed contingent was still being held at Tientsin—a symbol of American interest in the balance of power in North China. On the eve of war with Japan in 1941 the United States ordered its forces out in order to escape capture or annihilation at the hands of the Japanese.

To return to the spheres of influence: While the Chinese nodded assent, the foreign powers prescribed their own terms and arranged among themselves not to trespass in each other's territories. Quite commonly rights of fortification and police control accompanied particular concessions. The Russians and the Germans stressed these rights in their respective spheres in the north; the Japanese entered the region in their footsteps; and from Shantung in the south to the three historic eastern provinces of Manchuria in the north, North

China by the end of the century was being prepared for permanent separation. Political ambitions were much keener in this region than they proved in central or southern China, where British and French interests were uppermost. The British especially showed a desire to molest the integrity of China as little as possible, they were bent on keeping ahead in the development of the Yangtze Valley, but politically they contented themselves with a guaranty from the Chinese not to cede this area to any third power. Only as a last resort, apparently, did they intend to assume the political control themselves.

The division of the country into spheres of interest (or influence) showed that the investment problem was making the old conception of the open door obsolete. If there were to be only monopoly rights in the internal development of China, little would be left for free competition at the ports. Hay grasped the implications of this when he asked for equal port charges and railroad rates in the several spheres, but he made no bid for the admission of American capital to investment opportunities. An attempt to apply the principles of the open door in this respect was deferred for some years, then it was pushed by means of the international banking consortium, a device which we shall discuss in due course. The Boxer rebellion, meanwhile, accentuated the political disasters being imposed upon China. Anarchy threatened the very foundations of the open door, and in July 1900 Hay sent out a circular to the Great Powers which went beyond the open-door notes in stating the problem. American policy, he said was

to seek a solution which may bring about permanent safety and peace to China, *preserve Chinese territorial and administrative entity*, protect all rights guaranteed to friendly powers by treaty and international law, and safeguard for the world the principle of equal and impartial trade with all parts of the Chinese Empire.⁴

Alas for the success of such a policy in the face of the spreading chaos at Peking. Hay himself lost faith in his policies when government disappeared in the old Manchu capital; the War and Navy Departments decided it was high time for the United States to join in the general scramble, and the Secretary ordered the American minister in China to secure a coaling station and territorial concession at Samsah Bay, Fukien province. Japan, however, had priority rights here, and she refused to recognize this attempt at reversal of American policy. The location of Fukien was favorable for an American

⁴ Paul H. Clyde, *United States Policy toward China: Diplomatic and Public Documents, 1839-1939* (Durham, 1940), pp. 215-16. Italics inserted.

thrust from the direction of Manila, but it was opposite the Japanese-owned island of Formosa.⁶

China did not go permanently into chaos, as feared. The empress dowager was brought back to the capital, whence she had fled, and made to sign the reckoning, the terms of which have been previously outlined. It was not to the interest of the Powers to permit Chinese sovereignty to disappear; it was a convenient makeweight against one another, but it did not seriously interfere with the growth of foreign regional influence. Each of the European powers and Japan explicitly agreed in separate treaties with one another to uphold China's independence and integrity. With the making of these agreements the United States had nothing to do, and it appears in fact to have had little if any influence at this stage on the future of China. America was essentially an onlooker, and not a participant. Hay was not free to propose an international conference, for example, such as was held at Washington twenty years later. All that he could do was to keep the American hand in; he did not have any real share in the survival of China. This was due to the sturdiness and vastness of the country itself and to the mutual jealousies of the Great Powers. The misfortunes of the late '90's demoralized the Chinese in their confidence in the ancient order. The Boxers lighted the fires of nationalism against the foreigner, but only after the Revolution of 1911 was it realized how great was the need for internal reform adequate to build the country into an effective force against foreign encroachment. From that date stems the beginning of the New China, with genuine national independence and integrity as its distant goal.

The region where the future looked most doubtful included North China, Manchuria, and Korea. Korea was a nominally independent kingdom well known for its misgovernment and palace intrigue, the Japanese had opened it in 1876, and the United States had a treaty with this hermit kingdom which committed it to use its good offices in behalf of Korean independence should the kingdom

⁶ Samsah Bay was by no means the only spot along the China coast to attract American interest. There was a continuous quest for naval bases in this area, especially between the years 1898 and 1903. The Navy Department's choice fell on the Chusan Islands in the Gulf of Chihli. American naval officers began in 1898 to predict war in the Far East, presumably between Russia and Japan, and they wanted to take up positions which would be near the main scene of action. The south coast of Korea, opposite the Japanese island of Kyushu, was thought to offer another inviting opportunity. Dr. Horace N. Allen, the American minister and former missionary to Korea, favored a site there and advocated seizing it as soon as war came. Seward W. Livermore, "American Naval-Base Policy in the Far East, 1850-1914," *Pacific Historical Review*, XIII (1944), 113-35.

be threatened. Korea had the same treaty status as China with reference to the foreign powers, they were all on a plane of equality in the use of its ports. American missionaries showed a keen interest in the Koreans, and American capitalists were first on the ground in financing civic improvements there. Trade with Manchuria was chiefly in the form of shipments of cotton piece goods, flour, and kerosene through the Chinese treaty port of Newchwang.

In 1900 the power most to be feared in this whole region was Russia, supported by Germany. Despite their interest in Shantung, the Germans regarded the Far East as a safe field for Russian energies—it would make the Russians the more willing to leave the Balkans in Europe for German development. The Russians pushed briskly ahead. They were the first to pierce Manchuria with a railway system—the Chinese Eastern, which was the short cut across the north from the west to Vladivostok. There were also a connecting line from Harbin on the Chinese Eastern to Mukden and Port Arthur on Talien Bay; a line built southeasterly from Mukden to Antung near the Korean border; and additional agreements with the Chinese enabling them to build in the direction of Peking. With the railway concessions went exclusive mining rights and rights of administration which, as the Russians defined them, virtually converted all railway and mining property in Manchuria politically into Russian territory. Moreover, the Boxer uprising furnished Russia with an excuse to garrison the entire country generally, a military advantage which they declined to give up even though the disorders had been suppressed. Not only was Manchuria Russian in everything but name, all the signs pointed to a further sweep down into North China as far as the Yangtze and across the border into Korea. A thinly disguised timber concession on the Yalu River from the hermit king suggested that that hapless monarch was already playing puppet for the Russian Bear.

The one substantial obstacle to the Russians was an alliance between the British and the Japanese, concluded in 1902. Britain, Japan, and the United States had a common interest in getting Russia to honor the open door in Manchuria and retire her troops from the country. Simultaneously with the signing of the Anglo-Japanese alliance John Hay issued a memorandum denouncing the monopolizing of mines and railways in Manchuria; it was the step which formally identified the question of investment with the treaty system of equality for all nations. But the American government was not prepared to go further, political exigencies forbade it to align itself openly with the Anglo-Japanese alliance, though both

Hay and Theodore Roosevelt were personally in favor of so doing. They had misgivings about the expediency of permitting a great Russian power to expand and control the whole of the North Pacific, the almost certain eventuality if the Japanese were intimidated.

But the Anglo-Japanese partners on their part had sound reasons for standing firm. The British must keep Russia at arm's length in North China if they wished to keep their own foothold in the Yangtze Valley. For Japan the Russian retirement from the borders of Korea was a necessity and the military evacuation of the whole of Manchuria something much desired. The Japanese thirsted themselves for the control of Manchuria; their temporary conquest of the Liaotung peninsula in 1894 showed that. Ideally the solution was to apply the principle of equality and integrity to Korea and Manchuria; practically the feasibility of so doing was dubious; Korea was so wretchedly governed, and Chinese authority over the vast empty spaces of Manchuria was almost a figment of the imagination. It was a question of either Japan or Russia playing the preponderant role, and both the British and American governments preferred Japan.

At first the Russians accepted the signal given by the Anglo-Japanese alliance to evacuate Manchuria. But a change of heart in the midst of the evacuation caused more grief. The Japanese then assumed the initiative in pressing the Czar to carry out his pledges, while the British stood by to restrain Germany and France from egging on the Russians. Both the Germans and the French had an economic as well as a political interest in a Russian preponderance in Manchuria and North China—they were the financiers of Russian railway and other projects. The Russians gave the Japanese only hes and deliberate delays and, their patience exhausted, the Nipponese struck suddenly on February 8, 1904, at the Russian fleet in Port Arthur.

British and American money was bet on Japan, though both countries were astonished by the extent of the Nipponese triumph. They expected the Japanese to establish themselves in Korea and form an effective barrier to Russia in Manchuria; they did not anticipate the substitution of Japanese for Russian supremacy. Britain and the United States played benevolent neutrals to Japan in the war. They wanted Russia checked, and they heartened the Japanese to issue the challenge of battle. A month previous to the attack at Port Arthur, Roosevelt signaled Tokyo that he would be neutral, thus giving Japan a free hand in beginning the war. After the outbreak of hostilities he boasted that he had wained France and Ger-

many that he would bring the United States into the war on the Japanese side if they moved to support Russia. It is questionable whether the warning was really given and whether it was actually needed. It appears to have been a not uncharacteristic Rooseveltian boast. Moreover, France and Germany were preoccupied with mutual jealousies in North Africa and were not planning to aid Russia beyond relaxing their neutrality rules in her favor. Roosevelt magnified his own importance; the United States was not the power in holding back the French and Germans that he thought it was; but nevertheless the United States was a sort of third partner to the Anglo-Japanese alliance, with Japan elected and ready to fight it out with the Russians for the mastery of the North China and Manchuria area.

The community of interest among the British-American-Japanese partners was limited, however. All three recognized that a successful war would enhance Japan's power, but the United States was least inclined to see Japan get out of hand. Roosevelt thought that American interest would be served best if the two parties exhausted themselves, but he was prepared to give Japan special recognition in Korea. The President took little stock in the ability of the Koreans to stand alone, he believed they were fated to come either under the shadow of the Bear or the rays of the Rising Sun, and he preferred the latter. A written memorandum agreed upon between Count Katsura, the Japanese foreign minister, and William Howard Taft, Roosevelt's personal emissary, gave the desired assurance. Mr. Taft expressed only his personal opinion to Katsura, but Roosevelt had privately voiced the same view six months before Taft's visit to Japan. Taft told Katsura, so records the memorandum, that

the establishment by Japanese troops of a suzerainty over Korea to the extent of requiring that Korea enter into no foreign treaties without the consent of Japan was the logical result of the present war and would directly contribute to permanent peace in the East.⁶

Taft and Katsura reached an agreement on July 29, 1905, two weeks before the formal signatures to the second Anglo-Japanese alliance which accorded Japan the same recognition of her special interest in Korea on Britain's part. The Japanese had long since won their sweeping victories over the Russians—the battle of Mukden had given them control of all southern Manchuria in March 1905, and a great naval battle in the Sea of Japan in May had then finished off Russian power in the Pacific.

⁶ The memorandum is printed in full in Tyler Dennett, *Roosevelt and the Russo-Japanese War* (New York, 1925), pp. 112-14.

Roosevelt now felt that it was Japan's turn to be checked. He recalled her former interest in Hawaii and the Philippines and mistrusted her bid for naval supremacy in the North Pacific. Consequently one part of Mr. Taft's mission was to secure an explicit disclaimer of Japanese designs against the Philippines, an object which he had no difficulty in achieving. No doubt the American recognition of Japan's role in Korea was the more easily granted. The more difficult task was to see that Russia was not driven wholly from Manchuria, where she could act as a balance against Japan. Both parties by the summer of 1905 wanted to end the war, the Japanese because their strength in proportion to their conquests was limited and the Russians because of revolutionary disturbances at home. There was a good opportunity for a negotiated peace which would keep the two parties approximately even and thus serve American interest best. Roosevelt seized it, and at his invitation and under his prompting Russia and Japan made peace at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, in September 1905. The peace he conceived would leave points of friction as they were before the war between the two powers. Korea may belong to Japan, and to this the United States would offer no objection, but merely demand that Japan should respect the concessions acquired there by the United States. A permanent establishment of Japan in China was positively undesirable; and Russia must remain in Manchuria, but surrender Port Arthur as a fortress. . . . The United States would admit Russia's leading position in Manchuria and only insist upon free commerce there. . . .¹

This was hardly to the taste of the Japanese. In bad financial straits at the end of the war, they clung to a claim for money indemnity from Russia sufficient to recoup them for their expenses, and they wanted the cession of Sakhalin Island, half of which they had occupied, and the transfer of the Liaotung Peninsula and the Russian railway properties as far north as Harbin. They declared their willingness to restore Manchuria to China but with the suspicious qualification that the restoration was to be "subject to the guarantee of reform and improved administration." The indemnity had to be dropped, much to the Japanese discomfiture. The Russians refused to compromise here, even rejecting the proposition that they pay an indemnity in disguise by buying back the island of Sakhalin, and Roosevelt supported them. But otherwise Japan emerged from the Portsmouth Conference with her aims achieved: control of Korea, Port Arthur, and the South Manchuria Railway.

¹ Quoted in A. L. P. Dennis, *Adventures in American Diplomacy, 1896-1906* (New York, 1928), p. 365.

The earmarks of the open door and of Chinese sovereignty in Japan's newly won sphere were the establishment of treaty ports and the recognition of Chinese customhouses. These were extended after some prodding by the United States, but otherwise southern Manchuria had become very definitely a Japanese sphere of influence. A very naive effort on the part of the American railroad financier, Edward H. Harriman, in 1907 to persuade the Tokyo government to give him trackage rights over the South Manchuria Railway to connect with the Trans-Siberian in a round-the-world transportation system was the test; the Japanese of course rebuffed it. Furthermore, with the railway went the rights of police and administration that made the railway properties the political domain of the proprietary power. And an agreement with China designed to shut out any foreign competition in railroad construction gave the Japanese a substantial monopoly in South Manchuria; the Russians had already accorded them that status in return for a concession of Russian supremacy in northern Manchuria, and the European powers including Britain, were satisfied. The Japanese had, by the renewal of their alliance in 1905, furnished the British with a full equivalent for the free hand tacitly given them in Manchuria.

In contrast to American opinion, the British obviously were pleased by the enhancement of Japanese power. It gave them added security against the Russians, for the alliance of 1905 extended its protection to the British in India. When an entente between Britain and Russia in 1907 succeeded in halting Anglo-Russian rivalries, the Japanese alliance could be regarded as reinsurance against the mounting threat of Germany. England now had security agreements with her two former bitter rivals, France and Russia, and had harmonized her Far Eastern interests with the ambitions of her Japanese ally. She was prepared to stand aside while the Japanese developed their monopoly in South Manchuria.

On the face of things the relation of Manchuria to China proper had not been altered. Each one of the international agreements affecting China, including the Anglo-Japanese alliance, continued to reiterate the principles of equal opportunity, independence, and territorial integrity; Manchuria was not rated separately, and ostensibly it was in 1906 freer to foreign trade than the rest of the empire. Eighteen of its cities, all but two of them inland towns, were open ports. It was the Japanese monopoly of the transportation system that turned this into a mockery. Discriminatory freight rates, control of the foreign mails admitted to Manchuria through the Japanese postoffice, the beginning of systematic efforts to plant Jap-

anese colonies in the country, and other devices put other merchants at a hopeless disadvantage. It was a question of practical international politics as to how far the United States or any other power should go in ignoring the discriminations. Britain and the Continental powers, as previously stated, justified their silence by reasons of high policy. After 1905 Britain gave the United States no support in the Far East, on her part, the United States stood detached from the British security problem in western Europe.

Nor were the Americans free to take a really strong position against Japan. The war had unquestionably shifted the naval balance in the North Pacific; the Anglo-Japanese alliance, it was understood, was not aimed at the United States; on the other hand, the British could not be relied on for assistance, should the American island empire in the Pacific be attacked. Even Theodore Roosevelt was now forced to admit that the Philippines were "hostages to fortune" in the Far Western Pacific. It was not that he feared a cold-blooded act of aggression on the part of Japan. It was the enmity which American treatment of Japanese immigrants to the United States had aroused in Nippon. Exclusionism had long been practiced successfully and offensively against the Chinese, after 1900 it turned more against Japan, whence were coming the largest number of Oriental immigrants. A particularly insulting incident occurred in 1905, just as Nippon was fastening on the wings of victory in Asia, the San Francisco school board ostentatiously ordered the segregation of Japanese pupils in the public schools. Roosevelt exerted himself to appease Japan; he got the school board to rescind its order, and he negotiated a Gentlemen's Agreement for the control of immigration, Japan herself to handle the situation through the power to refuse passports. But the President also transferred the fleet to the Pacific, and in 1907 he sent it on a spectacular voyage around the world.

A war scare whipped up by the press in both countries had by that time subsided. The issue of the safety of the American island possessions in the Pacific, nevertheless, had been raised with startling force. It was the second time the possibility of a Japanese attack on the Philippines had been raised. Impelled perhaps by a feeling that the United States would pay a price for a guaranty of its insular possessions, the Japanese Ambassador in Washington, Mr. Aoki, suggested to President Roosevelt a three-point agreement to maintain "the existing order of things in the Pacific area." The Ambassador probably saw in his proposed agreement a chance for a subtle recognition by the United States of Japan's special position in Man-

churia. Nothing came of the proposal for a year, then in November 1908, after the immigration issue had temporarily subsided, both governments reached an agreement along the lines of Mr. Aoki's suggestions "Uninfluenced by any aggressive tendencies," they declared, it was their policy to maintain the *existing* status quo in the *region of the Pacific Ocean*. They were determined "to preserve the common interests of all powers in China by supporting by all pacific means at their disposal the independence and integrity of China and the principle of equal opportunity for commerce and industry of all nations in that Empire."

This was known as the Root-Takahira Agreement, after the names of Elihu Root, the Secretary of State, and the Japanese Ambassador. Anyone was free to put his own meaning on its ambiguous phrases. The Japanese might claim that the United States had now recognized their special position in Manchuria, as the European powers had already done. To do so they would have to stress the phrases "*existing* status quo" and "Pacific region." If Manchuria were a part of the Pacific region, the geographical limits of which the agreement left to the imagination, they had a case to argue. By 1908 the existing situation there was well known to be in their favor. On the other hand, the clear-cut declaration of the principles of the open door stared them in the face. The American government could emphasize this part of the agreement, or it could follow in the footsteps of the European powers and subtly ignore the open door in Manchuria. In the latter case it had its own precedent in Korea to follow: it had turned its back on the open door there in 1905.

Precisely what was in the minds of Roosevelt and Root remained their own secret. Possibly they meant to keep the Japanese guessing. William Howard Taft, who was already slated to succeed Roosevelt, soon dashed whatever hopes Japan may have had. Under his administration the United States returned to the principles of China's independence and of the open door more forcefully than it had yet done. Taft had personally had more actual contact with the Far East than any of his predecessors or than any Secretary of State. He had served as governor of the Philippines; he had been twice to Japan and China; and he had traveled over the Trans-Siberian Railway from Moscow and down through Manchuria to Port Arthur. He knew and sympathized with the leading American missionaries, whose interest in advancing Chinese political as well as social welfare was traditional. Willard Straight, the chief of the new Division of Far Eastern Affairs, felt the same way; as consul-general at Mukden after the Russo-Japanese War, Straight had felt the full force of Japanese

policies. He was convinced that the United States must make good on the principles of China's integrity, and his opinions were supported by the new Secretary of State, Philander C. Knox.

The Taft administration grasped the fact that the future of China's integrity was contingent upon the construction and control of the railways, plans for which were being rapidly projected during the decade. In 1895 there were but two hundred miles of line, by 1913, the mileage had expanded to more than six thousand. Manchuria, one of the least densely populated portions of the Empire, had, thanks to the Russians and Japanese, the largest concentration of railways. Furthermore, the Japanese aimed to protect themselves by binding China not to charter any line in competition with the South Manchuria Railway. The Chinese, on the other hand, believed that their best chance to keep Manchuria was to pit foreign competitors against the Japanese line. A project of a British firm to construct a long railway from Peking through Manchuria to connect with the Trans-Siberian line was favored by them but was vetoed by the British government, clearly the latter was resolved to let the Japanese enjoy their spoil. But Straight, Harriman, and Knox thought otherwise. Harriman was still eager to buy the South Manchuria and the Chinese Eastern lines; failing this, he proposed to get the necessary capital from the New York banks and build a competitive line from Chinchow to Aigun on the Amur River and freeze the Japanese out.

The railroad builder's death killed his dream, but meanwhile Secretary Knox had put forth a plan of his own. Knox's idea was to neutralize all the railways in Manchuria by getting the Japanese and the Russians to share the ownership with American and European capitalists. The Secretary fumbled sadly; oblivious to the meaning of the Anglo-Japanese alliance, he approached the British government first. He got only a cold rejoinder, Britain, as we have seen, had virtually given Japan a blank check in Manchuria in return for valuable help in protecting her interests elsewhere in China and in the Indian Ocean.

The Japanese alliance was part of the general security system which Britain had worked out as a safeguard against Germany; so was the Anglo-Russian entente of 1907. From this system the United States stood aloof. It saw no relationship between the peace of the Far East and the peace of western Europe. The European powers had sacrificed China's interests in favor of their own security nearer home. The United States was committed to building up China, but it could make little headway without European assistance. This it

was hopeless to expect unless the United States showed a readiness to support the existing balance of power in western Europe. The peculiarities of American policy were reduced to this fundamental point: the United States was a keen advocate of a collective system in the Far East, where it aspired to leadership; but it left the balance of power in western Europe to England. It failed to realize the high price that the British were obliged to pay in order to maintain the balance.

The chief end of American policy in the Far East was to construct a balance of power, the choice of means selected by the Taft administration was financial participation in the railways, and the only way of implementing the choice was to persuade American financiers to make China an investment field. The government itself of course was not in a position to act as its own financier, as it was in later years. It had to use the New York banks as its instrument of policy. Without their co-operation the trend toward regional monopoly in China, with its fatal influences on Chinese politics, could not be checked. A State Department memorandum in 1909 declared: the nations that finance the great Chinese railways and other enterprises will be foremost in the affairs of China and the participation of American capital in these investments will give the voice of the U.S. more authority in political controversies in that country which will go far toward guaranteeing the preservation of the administrative entity of China.

Japan was the principal source of anxiety, being the nation nearest geographically to the capital of the Manchus. Her recently acquired naval power was a potential threat to the American island empire in the western Pacific, chiefly the Philippines. The memorandum reasoned:

So long as the U.S. holds the Philippines the domination of China by other nations to our exclusion would be fraught with danger and it is unthinkable that this country should be squeezed out of any combination exercising an influence at Peking. *The balancing of power in China is essential to peace in the Orient just as it has been necessary in Turkey to keep Europe quiet.* Our interests in Asiatic waters require the prevention of the establishment of predominant interests and influences at Peking on the part of other powers and that American prestige in China be undiminished.*

Men like Harriman and Straight were eager to push the initiative financially, but Harriman's colleagues were less enthusiastic. The

* This memorandum is quoted by A. Whitney Griswold, *The Far Eastern Policy of the United States* (New York, 1938), pp. 143-44. Italics inserted.

United States failed to check Japan, for reasons already shown. To accomplish that Russian assistance was indispensable. Knox made slight attempts to explore this possibility, but had he done so it is questionable whether he could have succeeded; for Russia too was a member of the security system of western Europe, and her practical partition of Manchuria in co-operation with Japan served her interests well.

Chiefly through the influence of Willard Straight, the New York bankers agreed to participate with European bankers in three separate projects for the development of China. One involved the construction of a system of railways in South China between Hankow and Canton, another, in 1910, was concerned with a plan to reform the Chinese currency and start an industrial development in Manchuria aimed at the Japanese monopoly, the third, which was formulated after the Revolution of 1911, was designed to help the new republic to its feet. None of these loans was a success, either from the standpoint of the bankers, who made little money from them and got only bad looks from their British, German, and French colleagues or from the standpoint of high governmental policy, which succeeded only in increasing the tension among the powers in China without manifestly contributing to the internal stability of that country. China seemed even more hopeless than her European counterpart, Turkey. The American bankers certainly thought so: once the Taft administration was out and Wilson was in, they petitioned to be allowed to withdraw from the consortium. Only a promise of direct support from the government, they said, could induce them to remain.

Thus the open door and the integrity of China had proceeded from bad to worse in the dozen years since the Boxer Rebellion. Any substantial reality in the success of American policy was contingent upon the appearance of some political unity and strength within China herself. The prospect of this seemed hopeless by 1910, and whatever balance of power still remained rested on the flimsy foundations of the international banking consortiums. Japan's hold had tightened on South Manchuria and Eastern Inner Mongolia, that part of the old Chinese Empire which lay immediately to the north of the eastern end of the Great Wall. The question was whether she could be appeased if left to herself in that region. Theodore Roosevelt, a private citizen now, thought so. He advocated giving the Japanese a free hand there in the hope of gaining their goodwill elsewhere. Five years later Japan, capitalizing the war in Europe, made her first daring bid for the hegemony of China itself. How Roosevelt reacted to that event has not been recorded.

The war of 1914 seemed to the Japanese a heaven-sent opportunity: it set them free to blueprint their own plans for China. These plans included: (1) the capture and exploitation of the German leasehold and property rights in Shantung, (2) the establishment of unquestioned predominance in South Manchuria and Eastern Inner Mongolia, (3) pre-emption of the coal and iron properties in Central China, hitherto guarded by the British, (4) declaration of a sphere of influence over the maritime province of Fukien; and (5) general supervision over the domestic affairs of the Chinese government and right of entry into South China by means of three railways to be built from the middle Yangtze to the southern coast. In a word, China was to be converted into a Japanese dependency and the interests of the Western Powers, who had behaved with habitual arrogance toward Japan, were to be reduced to the thinnest shadows.

The inefficient balance of power, sustained through the last dozen years by means of aggravating attempts at competition in railway building and quarrelsome banking consortiums, was to be extinguished. In China proper, let it be recalled, the three western European powers (Britain, France, and Germany) had kept an uneasy equilibrium, with the United States an unwelcome fourth. From the Japanese sphere—South Manchuria and Eastern Inner Mongolia—the European powers had agreed to stay out. Not so the United States. This power alone had insisted on regarding the whole of the former Chinese empire as a territorial and administrative unit: it had not only eluded the Japanese effort to gain approval for their claim to paramountcy in South Manchuria, it had even poured salt on the wound by bidding for a share in the control of the Japanese-operated railway.

In the long run the Japanese dream was conditioned by three factors: China's vitality and will to be free; the extent and the permanency of the European distraction in the West, and the ultimate attitude assumed by the United States. All three were unanswered riddles. China was still in form an independent political entity, called a republic. The United States, true to its traditions, had hastened to recognize it in 1913. There was a small organized nationalist party centered in Canton and inspired by the revolutionary hero, Dr. Sun Yat-sen; but the reins of power were in the hands of a crafty politician, Yuan Shih-k'ai, in the north. Yuan was impatient to found his own dynasty and restore the empire.

The European war, of course, suspended the banking consortium—the former partners were now enemies, Germany against France and Britain. Germany's own concessions in Shantung were exposed

to easy capture by the Japanese, Britain's allies. As for promotion of the consortium by the British and French, the cost of a gigantic war in the West made that purely an academic question. There was still the Anglo-Japanese alliance, which filled a dual purpose: it furnished the pretext to the Japanese to get into the war for their own advantage, but it also was a tool to be used by Britain to restrain her ally. A balance sheet for the alliance would show a net profit for the Japanese: Britain's dependence upon the Japanese navy and merchant marine in the Pacific and Indian oceans was heavy, especially in the later years of the war. The Japanese captured all of the German islands in the Pacific north of the Equator and obliged the British in 1917 to sign an agreement recognizing their right to keep both the islands and the German holdings in Shantung province, which they had taken early in the war. On the other hand, the British were able to bring enough pressure to bear in 1915 to discourage their ally from the most extravagant portion of her China program, the control of the iron mines of Central China and the harnessing of the whole country under Japanese tutelage. Indeed it appears that the British and American governments, working together, temporarily redressed the balance against Japan in 1915.

Against both British and American wishes the Japanese pounced on the Germans in Shantung in late August 1914; by November they had the entire leased territory, including the railway leading into the interior of China, under their control. This was their principal objective: the British in the first instance had tried to discourage them from participating in the war at all and, failing in that, had suggested that they confine their attentions to German shipping in the Pacific. Neither choice suited Japan, however; Kato, the foreign minister, insisted on making the German positions in Shantung the direct cause of going to war. The naval base at Kiaochow, home of the German Asiatic squadron, was sufficient excuse. But the underlying purpose was to capsize all of the Western Powers in China, Britain included. Shantung proved merely the starting point.

Here was striking testimony to the immaturity of the collective system. China, Germany, Britain, and the United States had a common interest in the status quo, and they all sensed trouble if Japan embarked in the war. China had asked for American support in persuading the powers to refrain from hostilities against each other's leased territories or shipping in her marginal waters; the American government broadened this cautiously into a proposal to Great Britain to neutralize the entire Pacific Ocean, a proposal which the Germans at once eagerly approved. Britain was ready to neutralize China,

including the leaseholds, but not the Pacific Ocean. She was tempted by the opportunity to sweep her enemy's commerce from the entire basin. Even had she been favorably disposed toward it, the proposal would have brought shrill dissent from Australia and New Zealand, which had long thirsted for the German islands.⁹

The possibility of forging a solidarity of interests in China, even between the two European enemies, was thus neglected. China did her best to attract the attention of the United States, the one power, she realized that was now able to hold the balance. The American government possessed an entering wedge in the Root-Takahira Agreement of 1908, which had recognized "the existing status quo" in the Pacific Ocean. The agreement, moreover, contained the germ of a consultative procedure. It read

Should any event occur threatening the status quo as above described . . . it remains for the two Governments to communicate with each other in order to arrive at an understanding as to what measures they may consider it useful to take.

The shrewd, American-educated Chinese Foreign Minister, Dr. Wellington Koo, reminded the American representative how this clause might be used to stay the Japanese aggression in Shantung. He even hinted at the feasibility of American naval support. Apparently his was the first suggestion that American armaments should be used in a "Stop Japan" movement. Its only effect was to elicit derision. The acting Secretary of State, Robert Lansing, thought it "quixotic" that the United States should concern itself over Shantung. It looked like an invitation to pull Chinese chestnuts from the fire. So in one sense it was. There was no precedent for interfering to protect a foreign leasehold or, as Dr. Koo hoped, for assisting in its return to China. Yet there was a chance for quick thinking and audacious leadership on the part of the United States. The problem was to give Japan no excuse for going to war, and there was nothing to prevent a really brilliant American executive from seizing hold of the Root-Takahira Agreement. The Germans tried to cede their concessions back to China, with strings attached, so as to prevent their capture; the British were strongly in favor of peace with China; the stage, it seemed, afforded a perfect setting for the United States to

⁹ See the next chapter. In the American proposal to neutralize the entire basin there was a dim appreciation of the interrelationship of the security of China and the security of the western Pacific. But it was too fleeting to arouse the American government from its inertia. Compare the chapter above on the First World War for the relative anxiety shown by the United States as to its interests in the Atlantic

play the role of "honest broker" on the basis of the simple return of the Shantung rights to the Chinese.

Four years later at the Paris Peace Conference this is precisely what Wilson and Lansing moved heaven and earth to accomplish. Shantung proved to be one of the most controversial issues of the Conference; it almost brought about the failure of the treaty at Paris, and the compromise which Wilson was forced to arrange with the Japanese in regard to it drew more recrimination from his Senatorial opponents in 1919 than any other issue except the League of Nations. Once she had got a grip on Shantung, Japan was naturally tenacious. She tied up China in agreements which actually gave her more rights than the Germans had held. The single loophole was that she still acknowledged Chinese sovereignty in the province. Wilson conceded her the right to settle with Germany directly in regard to the latter's former concessions in exchange for a promise to return Shantung to the Chinese in full sovereignty, Japan to retain the economic rights won from Germany. It was a difficult face-saving operation and a real surrender on Japan's part, which Wilson's bitter opponents in America refused to appreciate. Nevertheless, the Nipponese hoped to evade the fulfillment of their promise, and it took two years more of prodding to get them to carry it out.¹⁰

The Japanese program for overlordship in China was summed up in the famous Twenty-One Demands, submitted to the Chinese in January 1915. The demands were organized in five groups, the general nature of which has been outlined above. Hoping to catch the Western Powers unaware, the Japanese government intended a quick, secret negotiation with the Chinese. In this, however, they were disappointed, China not only disclosed the terms to the American minister but showed unaccustomed power herself in withstanding the Japanese demands. In May she signed a treaty which only partially accepted the Japanese program.

The American government was far less hostile to the Twenty-One Demands than might be supposed. There was even considerable sentiment for propitiating the Japanese. The State Department was disposed to be guided by the counsel of its Chief of the Division of Far Eastern Affairs, Mr. E. T. Williams, whose long contacts in the Far East had made him sympathetic with Japanese problems of population pressure and emigration. Furthermore, Washington had a serious issue of its own with Japan springing from the anti-alien land legislation enacted by the state of California in 1913, laws aimed

¹⁰ See the preceding chapter for the Shantung and other Far Eastern issues at the Paris Peace Conference.

expressly at Japanese ownership and control of land within the state. The emotional effect of this legislation upon the Japanese people had equaled that of the San Francisco school discrimination of 1906—the United States was attempting to pin another badge of inferiority upon them.

Wilson had tried the same course with the Californians as Roosevelt in 1906, but with less success. The land problem was really far more serious than the school-segregation question, and the California laws were there to stay. But the Japanese were bent on procuring equal treatment for people of their blood in this country, theirs was an indignation which no amount of excuses for California could overcome.

The Secretary of State, Bryan, thought he saw a way around the difficulty. Practically all of the Japanese population in the United States was concentrated in a single Western state. If by diplomatic agreement between the United States and Japan an arrangement could be made for dispersing the Japanese throughout the other states on the basis of a quota of not more than one thousand per state, the number in California could be reduced by half and the reasons for friction eliminated.

It was an interesting idea, Bryan thought the trouble basically was economic, not racial, and he figured on restricting the influx of Japanese into any one city, village, or voting precinct to 5 per cent of the existing population. Wilson suspected that the ground for antagonism was racial and feared lest an attempt to apply Bryan's idea would only incite the other states to follow California's example. The proposal was dropped, and no escape from the dilemma was ever found. California and her sister Coast states undoubtedly required the protection of legislation against Oriental control of their lands. But the question was only partly economic, judging by the persistence with which the Westerners clamored for exclusion and the recklessness with which they rebuffed all Japanese pleas for equality. California had another chance to show her arrogance; in 1924 her conspicuous die-hard Senator, Hiram Johnson, a man who in 1919 had heaped reproaches on Japan for her aggressions in Shantung, administered a further insult. There was pressing need for a new immigration law to apply a quota system to foreign immigrants, and Johnson took advantage of the emergency to achieve the total exclusion, so long sought by the Californians: the quota system was applied equally to European nations in such a way as to avoid giving offense, but persons "ineligible for citizenship" were expressly debarred and the Supreme Court of the United States in 1922 had so

defined the Japanese. It was no comfort to the latter that other Orientals were included in this category.

Now to revert to the Twenty-One Demands and the policy shaped toward them by the United States. In 1915 Washington was still deaf to the importance of Shantung, though at the end of the war it mobilized its whole force on the question of this one province. The Department of State was in favor of yielding Manchuria, especially if the Japanese would give up their complaints about the California land legislation. "I am not sure," remarked Mr. Bryan privately, "but that it would be worth while for China to agree to the cession of Manchuria to Japan if, by doing so, she could secure freedom as to the rest of the country."¹¹ And Lansing proposed a deal by which the United States would waive its treaty rights in South Manchuria and Shantung if Japan would cease complaints about the land legislation, reaffirm the open door, and agree not to monopolize the industries or discriminate among the railways of these territories. The American government in fact came close to recognizing Japan's claims to a sphere of influence there. Bryan officially advised the Japanese Ambassador that "the United States frankly recognizes that territorial contiguity creates special relations between Japan and these districts," which he had previously specified as Shantung, South Manchuria, and East Mongolia.

Two years later an exchange of notes occurred between Secretary Lansing and the Japanese special ambassador, Viscount Ishii, who headed a mission to this country chiefly for the sake of getting American recognition of the Japanese sphere. Publicly the viscount explained the Japanese attitude in reverse terms, he advocated a general renunciation of spheres of influence and plied the analogue of the Monroe Doctrine as descriptive of Japan's attitude toward China. He wanted a recognition of the special relationship between Japan and China as conditioned by geography, and he depicted the Japanese policy as one of peace and nonintervention in the Far East. The inference was that the open door was safest under Japanese guardianship.

Two months of diplomatic hedging produced an equivocal agreement by which the United States recognized Japan's "special interests" in China by virtue of her "territorial propinquity," particularly in the part to which her possessions were contiguous; Japan in turn again declared her allegiance to the open door and the independence of China. Once more things had arrived at a stalemate between the two countries. If, as they asserted, the Japanese really believed they

¹¹ Bryan to Wilson, February 22, 1915, *The Lansing Papers*, II, 406

had obtained a *carte blanche* recognition of their paramountcy in the Far East, they were mistaken. Prior to Ishii's arrival Wilson had explicitly told his secretary that that was not what the United States had in mind. Furthermore, under the prompting of the American minister to Peking, Paul S. Reinsch, the Wilson administration had resorted once more to membership in the banking consortium. That practically defunct organization was resuscitated by American credits in 1916 as the only practicable means of impeding a Japanese hold on Chinese finances.

The situation none the less was more uncertain than ever before. Pressures from various sources had reduced the Twenty-One Demands to a pale version of the original, the Japanese were by no means in charge of China. But in the practical sense they had Shantung and South Manchuria, and they had succeeded in throwing doubt into American and British opinion. The analogue of the Monroe Doctrine had a seductive appeal, and the contest between Lansing and Ishii for generalship in terms came close to a victory for the Japanese view. The State Department was inclined to be accommodating, but it was offset partly by the influence of its own representative in China, Mr. Reinsch. Tireless in his efforts to cement Sino-American relations, the American minister was personally influential in persuading the Chinese to enter the war against Germany in 1917. He perceived this would give China an advantage against her chief enemy, Japan, as a co-partner she would be better placed at the Peace Conference to stand off Nipponese claims for special privilege.

Meanwhile the Japanese had caught their British ally in a position far more compromising than that of the United States. British opinion was haunted with irresolution fear, as Mr. Balfour described it, lest Japan would attempt the role in the Far East that Prussia was playing in Europe; on the other hand, a disposition to admit that China was fated to be a safety valve for a nation which the United States and the British dominions had excluded from their continents. There was always danger that the Germans would wean Japan from the Allied side, and her aid was greatly valued in the warfare at sea. Consequently it was not surprising that the British were forced to agree secretly in February 1917 to give her a free hand in Shantung and admission of her right to the German islands in the Pacific north of the Equator. This was one of the important secret treaties by which they managed to hold together the wartime coalition against Germany. Through Mr. Balfour, the Foreign Secretary, the British government took the American government into its confidence in

the matter of the other secret treaties, but it withheld information about the Japanese agreement.¹² Unknown to itself, therefore, the United States in 1917 stood isolated in its China policy; it was the one major power that had conceded nothing to Japan.

This isolation became most marked at the Peace Conference. Woodrow Wilson had already resumed in a more pronounced form than ever the American championship of China's integrity and sovereignty. He revived the banking consortium, the same for which he had once reproached his predecessor; and he gave the American bankers more direct assurance of support than they had ever had from Taft. Moreover, they were to be free to operate directly in the Japanese spheres of South Manchuria and Inner Mongolia. No distinction was allowed between these regions and China proper. Finally, Wilson resolved to set a brake upon the advantages the Japanese were reaping in northern Manchuria and Siberia at the expense of the prostrate Russians. Fears lest they absorb Vladivostok and eastern Siberia as far west as Lake Baikal were inducement enough to him to send an American expeditionary force of nine thousand men to join the Allied forces in that region.

But it was the Shantung question that drew the greatest fire. Wilson and Lansing now realized the strategic value of this province; in spite of Japan's four years of actual possession and in spite of the agreements she had with the Allies and China herself, they were resolved to dislodge her. China during the war had really grown weaker; Canton, the home of the nationalists, ruled over the southern provinces, but the military clique in Peking controlled the north. The latter had been fed on Japanese loans during the war, and naturally it was complacent in granting the rewards that Japan expected. The young Chinese at Paris, however, led by Wellington Koo and C. T. Wang, both of them American-educated and filled with a zeal to put punch into the fine old doctrines of independence and equality, had the President's ear. Wilson was loath to grant any justice to the Japanese claim, but he finally agreed to the face-saving device of their obtaining a direct cession from Germany in return for their promise to hand over the province in full sovereignty to China. His victory was less substantial than it seemed, however, because Japan retained the economic privileges she had won from Germany. Inasmuch as these included control of the railway from Kiaochow Bay

¹² There is a long-standing controversy over what knowledge the American government possessed of the secret treaties. The facts are as above stated and can be verified by reading the paper left by Mr. Balfour with Secretary Lansing, May 18, 1917. The paper consisted of Balfour's own confidential "Statement on Foreign Policy to the British Imperial War Council." See *Lansing Papers*, II, 19-32.

to Tsinan, junction point for the traffic into North China, Japan still held the advantage. Wilson and the publicity of the young Chinese nationalists had aroused American popular sentiment to a pitch that it had never reached before. His opponents in the Senate now salted the wound he had made—the President's pyrrhic victory was too good an opportunity to be missed in attacking the treaty. It also gave men like Senators Johnson and Borah a field day for heaping abuse upon the Japanese.

The American government now turned more cautiously to finding a weak spot in the Anglo-Japanese alliance, the pedestal of Japan's aggressions in China. Any realism in the American policy required that Great Britain be weaned, and she was delicately reminded that she had nothing to gain from the advantages the Japanese were reaping. There were several dubious questions related to this alliance. The most obvious one concerned the problem of sea power in the western Pacific. Overshadowing all other considerations, however, was the general demand for naval limitation, since a race for the biggest navy seemed inevitable between the two English-speaking nations. A resolve to prevent it was the main inducement for summoning the international conference which met in Washington in November 1921.

But the supple Secretary of State, Charles Evans Hughes, upon whom Wilson's mantle had fallen, saw the relationship between naval limitation and practical politics in the Pacific, and the significance of the Washington Conference arose out of the attention given to the problems of that area. Hughes was very comprehensive: a definite understanding among the powers on the question of China's independence and integrity was, he believed, essential to peace in Asia. He disregarded a veiled warning from Japan not to bring up questions which she looked upon as of sole concern to herself, and he rebuffed a suggestion from the British Foreign Secretary that the United States recognize the Japanese spheres and join the Anglo-Japanese alliance.

This was in fact the naked question: whether the United States would enter the security system set up for the Pacific by the Anglo-Japanese alliance, which meant that Japan would be given a free hand at least in Manchuria and Eastern Inner Mongolia; or whether a more genuine collective system could be devised which would lend vitality to the tradition of China's independence and territorial integrity. The British had no conviction on the latter point; the Americans had. Optimism for China was blended with an immovable belief that Japan must be reined. During the nineteenth century

Great Britain had stood firm on the principle of the independence and integrity of Turkey; she was the champion of the Ottoman Porte against the encroachments of the Czar and she believed in Turkey's possibilities. The similarity of the American relationship to China in the twentieth century is inescapable.¹⁸

Various pressures obliged the British Foreign Secretary to yield the leadership in 1921 to Mr. Hughes. That was the underlying meaning of the Washington Conference. The United States assumed the initiative in balancing the peace in the Pacific Ocean, including China, and the Anglo-Japanese alliance was dissolved in favor of the American program. This consisted of three security agreements. The first two related to the distribution of naval power and the protection of territories and possessions in the Pacific Ocean. They belong to the subject of the next case. The third was a treaty signed by nine powers with interests in China, Japan and China herself included. Elihu Root, the co-author of the Root-Takahira Agreement of 1908 which Mr. Hughes had said he wanted reissued, drew up the basic resolutions which were embodied in the treaty. The agreement was in form as well as in fact an international covenant binding the nine signatories to uphold the familiar principles; therein lay its unique character. Like the Covenant of the League of Nations, whose cardinal principle of respect for the territorial integrity and political independence of the member states was a borrowed one, the Nine-Power Treaty was a binding international obligation. All of the members had many times previously declared themselves committed to these principles respecting China, but they had never before covenanted together to uphold them.

Furthermore, the Nine-Power Treaty contained a more forceful and elaborate statement of principles than had before been attempted. For that reason it supplied China with a basic charter of liberties. The other eight powers covenanted as follows:

- (1) To respect the sovereignty, the independence, and the territorial and administrative integrity of China,
- (2) To provide the fullest and most unembarrassed opportunity to China to develop and maintain for herself an effective and stable government,
- (3) To use their influence for the purpose of effectually establishing and maintaining the principle of equal opportunity for the commerce and industry of all nations throughout the territory of China,

¹⁸ See the following chapter for the related problems of security in the western Pacific.

- (4) To refrain from taking advantage of conditions in China in order to seek special rights or privileges which would abridge the rights of subjects or citizens of friendly States and from countenancing action inimical to the security of such States¹⁴

The Nine-Power Treaty was a gamble on the future of China's success as a nation. It was a goal toward which American missionary influence had long been driving. The zeal with which the missionaries pursued their calling, the spread of Christian colleges in China, the impact of their teaching upon the new national-minded leadership of that country, and the inspiration they furnished to public opinion in the United States all pointed to one end—encouragement to the Chinese to make themselves strong and united. The goal of the missionaries was in keeping with what the new China was groping to do for itself, from the days of the Revolution of 1911 few of China's political leaders had escaped the influence of the American Christian college. Furthermore, there was a direct and continuous contact between the missionaries in China and those who formulated policies in Washington. At least one Secretary of State, Henry L. Stimson, openly acknowledged their influence upon him personally. He set it forth in justification of his own policies. He writes:

Throughout those years, in almost every fair-sized American community, particularly throughout our Northeastern and mid-Western states, there had been situated one or more churches, each of which was in whole or in part supporting one or more foreign missionaries, a large percentage of whom were working in China. The news of the work of these missionaries coming through their reports and letters reached a large number of our people living in almost every quarter of the land. To many of them the progress of this work was one of their keenest interests. They followed the details of Chinese progress as reported to them by their missionaries and thus acquired a humanitarian interest of a quite personal character in that land and its people.¹⁵

In sum, the labor expended by the missionaries through many years of service in China represents an American interest the importance of which can hardly be stated in terms of commerce or yet in terms of the money value of the missionaries' own investments.

¹⁴ Text of the Nine-Power Treaty in Paul H. Clyde, *United States Policy toward China. Diplomatic and Public Documents, 1839-1939* (Durham, 1940), pp. 281-83.

¹⁵ Henry L. Stimson, *The Far Eastern Crisis* (New York, 1936), pp. 153-54.

Sweeping demands, first raised at Paris in 1919 and repeated at the Washington Conference by the Chinese delegation, for the abolition of the unequal treaties, met with a cool reception. Except for Germany, who had lost her rights by the World War, extraterritoriality, the treaty ports, the foreign leaseholds, and the accompanying administrative rights held by the foreign powers remained untouched. The door was opened, nevertheless: At Washington the powers agreed to put the important question of Chinese tariff autonomy in the hands of an expert commission; ten years later, as a result of the work of this commission, China had full control of her tariffs. Furthermore, the strides taken by China toward unity during this decade fully justified the assumptions of the men at the Washington Conference. In 1920 there were three separate factions: the Kuomintang (Nationalist) party at Canton in control of the southern provinces; the military clique at Peking, the old northern capital, and Chang Tso-lin, the independent war lord of Manchuria. Of these the rulers at Peking appeared to be the chief obstacles to national unity. They were defeated in war by the Kuomintang, and Peking was entered in June 1928. Six months later Chang Hsueh-liang, son and successor of Chang Tso-lin in Manchuria, announced his allegiance to the Nationalists; in political framework, at least, China stood united for the first time in many years.

The object of the Chinese Nationalists was to recover full independence, and the policy of the foreign powers, Great Britain and the United States taking the initiative, was to modify the unequal treaties as fast as practicable. Boycotts and the outbreak of violence in Canton and Hankow in 1925-26 served as warnings, and the British government issued a memorandum in December 1926 advocating a joint declaration on the part of the treaty powers of their readiness to negotiate treaty revision. Specifically the British favored tariff autonomy. With this the Americans agreed, and even Japan declared her desire to help. Naturally, however, all three powers took the position that the Chinese must respect foreign life and property. This the Chinese did not do, serious violence broke out against the foreigners in Nanking in March 1927, followed by mob attacks in Shanghai. The foreign powers mustered warships in the Yangtze River for the protection of their interests, and the talk of treaty revision came abruptly to an end. Tariff autonomy was conceded in 1931, as aforesaid; but the danger of personal violence and attacks on property made it impracticable to surrender the rights of extraterritoriality and police control in the foreign concessions. The legality of these rights was still unimpaired in December 1941, when

Japan threw herself at last into a fight to the finish with the United States and the British Empire.¹⁰

The center of gravity now shifts to Manchuria, where the status quo, highly favorable to Japan, had been left unaltered by the Nine-Power Treaty. Here especially the treaty gambled with the future; on paper it redressed the balance of power, but by implication the duty of maintaining the balance fell upon the Chinese. The treaty left no means for collective enforcement. In contrast to the stipulations of the League of Nations Covenant, the Western Powers studiously avoided such a commitment and rested the whole work of the Washington Conference on the good faith of the members. They made it all but impossible for themselves, in fact, to come to the military aid of China. The two agreements relating to sea power which accompanied the Nine-Power Treaty were designed to neutralize the forces of the three naval powers in the Pacific. The object was to set up naval ratios and security zones which would prevent any one or two of them from striking at the other. In consequence Japan was

¹⁰ But on January 11, 1943, treaties concluded with China by the United States and Great Britain brought these special rights to an end. Other Western countries still holding similar rights were preparing to follow suit. The treaty between the United States and China was approved by the Senate unanimously on February 11, 1943.

The principal provisions of the treaty are as follows: (1) Extraterritoriality is declared abrogated. (2) American rights under the Boxer Protocol of 1901 are terminated. These include rights in the diplomatic quarter at Peking and the right to station troops between Peking and the sea. (3) Rights of the United States in relation to the international settlements at Shanghai and Amoy are terminated. (4) Real property rights in China held by American nationals, including corporations and associations, are protected. (5) China agrees to accord to American nationals the right to travel, reside, and carry on trade throughout the republic. Thus lifts various restrictions to which Americans as well as other foreigners have been subjected in being confined to certain areas in which they might travel, reside, and carry on trade.

The treaty is, moreover, "accompanied by an exchange of notes in which the United States relinquished the special rights hitherto possessed by its naval vessels in Chinese waters, and special rights which vessels of the United States have had in relation to inland navigation and the coasting trade. Each country is to be accorded the rights which are customary and normal in modern international relations in regard to the admission of merchant vessels into ports open to overseas merchant shipping, the treatment of merchant vessels in such ports, and visits by naval vessels. If either country accords rights of inland navigation or coasting trade to vessels of any third country such rights would similarly be accorded to the vessels of the other country. In the light of the abolition of treaty ports as such, all coastal ports in Chinese territory which are normally open to American overseas merchant shipping will remain open to such shipping after the coming into effect of the treaty" Report of the Secretary of State to the President, January 18, 1943.

Furthermore, it was agreed that the two governments would negotiate a comprehensive modern treaty of friendship, commerce, navigation, and consular rights.

Text of the treaty, Report of the Secretary of State, and other relevant documents in *Department of State Bulletin*, VIII (No. 195, March 20, 1943), 238-48,

invested with supreme control of sea power in the North Pacific, a fact which underscored the purely moral character of the Nine-Power Treaty. The strategic advantages in relation to North China and Manchuria were now in her hands.

For the time being Russia was a cipher; in fact so hostile were the Western Powers toward her and so fearful of the Communist influence, that a wish to make a watchdog of Japan in the North Pacific appears to have been one of the unmentioned objectives of the Conference. With this sentiment the United States, the most outspoken anti-Bolshevik nation, unquestionably concurred. It wanted to get the Japanese out of eastern Siberia, which they still occupied since the inter-Allied expedition of 1918, and it succeeded in this object at the conference, but it certainly did not wish to see Russian influence become paramount again in Manchuria or North China. The goal of American policy was a strong, independent China, a bulwark against both Japan and Russia, capable itself of maintaining the balance of power in the Far East. The results were surprisingly successful, as we have noted. Russian influence was instrumental with the Kuomintang in South China, for a few years in the mid-1920's it appeared to be getting the upper hand; but in 1927 Chiang Kai-shek, generalissimo and leader of the Nationalists, expelled the Communists and shaped his policies in line with those of the Western Powers. It was this genuine Chinese Nationalist government that was rewarded with strong American diplomatic support in 1931, when Japan again attempted to tip the balance in her favor.

Ten years of progress in Manchuria pointed to an overturn of the Japanese applecart. The commission headed by Lord Lytton, whom the League of Nations sent in 1932 to investigate, pronounced the country "unalterably Chinese." As large as France and Germany combined, Manchuria in that year had thirty million people, all but two million of whom were Chinese. Most of the Chinese were farmers who had streamed into the region during the 1920's from the overcrowded provinces immediately to the south of the Great Wall. A bare two hundred thousand Japanese, most of them employees of the South Manchuria Railway, huddled along its right of way or in the leased area on the Liaotung Peninsula. Japanese legal rights were the same as they had been since the Russo-Japanese War of 1905 when Manchuria was a great empty land, they included the rights of military occupation along the property of the railway and of jurisdiction over all Japanese subjects in Manchuria.

Manchuria was still politically autonomous in 1931, though under the "young marshal," Chang Hsueh-liang, Chinese influence had

steadily increased. Chang had aligned himself with the Nationalists in Nanking. Naturally the latter pressed home their advantage by organizing the farmers to work for the full unification of the country with China. The movement was predominantly aimed at expelling the Japanese. By 1931 the tension was near the breaking point, and on September 18 the inevitable "incident" occurred: a fight took place between Japanese soldiers and Chinese on the railway right of way. This was followed by a major campaign on the part of Japan, which led quickly to the virtual conquest of the whole country and the setting up of a puppet state in 1932 under the name of Manchukuo. All of this was accomplished before the arrival of the Lytton Commission, dispatched by the League in the faint hope of finding a peaceful remedy. Moreover, a Chinese boycott, among other things, so infuriated the Japanese that they sent a naval force and landing party to invade Shanghai.

Under the guidance of Henry L. Stimson, Secretary of State under President Hoover, the United States exerted its best efforts to support the League of Nations in bringing a halt to the conflict. It resorted to the Paris Peace Pact of 1928 for its principal arguments, rather than to the Nine-Power Treaty. Mr. Stimson was naturally pro-Chinese, he has admitted as much in his book, *The Far Eastern Crisis*. But he thought the main test belonged to the general collective system which rested on the League Covenant and the Paris Pact. The Covenant, as we know, provided for sanctions against a violator; but the Pact did not. It was simply a terse statement in which the parties (some sixty of them, including Japan) renounced their right to use war "as an instrument of national policy." There were things about the Manchurian problem, however, which, as the sketch in the preceding paragraphs shows, could not be resolved by a simple recourse to the text of a treaty. Public opinion in the United States was wedded to the idea that this was a clear-cut case of aggression. Not so the Lytton Commission, which under considerable handicaps, carried on a prolonged examination of the problem. Japan, it agreed, regarded Manchuria as her "life-line", the Japanese dependence upon the country had grown steadily since 1905, and there was an irrepressible popular passion on the subject that could not be ignored. The attack in 1931 was "not a case in which one country has declared war on another country without previously exhausting the opportunities for conciliation provided in the Covenant. . . . Neither is it a simple case of the violation of the frontier of one country by the armed forces of a neighboring country, because in Manchuria there are many features without an exact paral-

lel in other parts of the world."¹⁷ A simple return to the status quo, the Commission declared, was no solution at all; it then proceeded to list a series of recommendations in favor of a stronger China but also advocating an autonomous regime in Manchuria which would safeguard the needs of Japan and quiet her fears for the safety of her vital interests in the country.

Unfortunately nothing so sane as this was possible. The Japanese in 1931 had plumped for a positive policy, a program of aggression in Manchuria demanded by the militarists under General Tanaka; the "friendship policy" of the '20's used by the conciliatory foreign minister, Baron Shidehara, had seemed to be leading to disaster. Once the situation turned in their favor, the militarists lost no time in carrying their program to completion. Mr. Stimson seized the bull by the horns in a fruitless endeavor to get collective action. The United States was the leader far more than Great Britain, indeed the latter's refusal to co-operate suggests that there was truth in a statement made by General Tanaka that as far back as 1927 he had sounded out the European powers and obtained from them the pledge of a free hand in Manchuria. It was obviously a survival of the British idea, inherent in the Anglo-Japanese alliance, that Manchuria was not an integral part of China and therefore was properly a Japanese sphere.

Whether Mr. Stimson failed because of the rapid pace forced by the Japanese in Manchuria or because of the cold shoulder given him by the British Foreign Office is anyone's guess. The British government was willing to have the League send a commission, but it was not willing to approve Mr. Stimson's desire to see the weapon of the economic embargo, provided for by the Covenant, tried out. Britain's refusal in this respect gave the Hoover administration a chance to escape the responsibility of asking Congress for an embargo by the United States. Considering the persistent lack of popular enthusiasm in the United States for an embargo on valuable exports of cotton, petroleum, and scrap metal to Japan during the years 1937 to 1941, when that country waged war upon the Chinese with a ferocity that paled the aggression of 1931, it may be doubted whether all the lukewarmness was in Britain in the former year. In the United States there was much wringing of hands and quickness to throw the blame on the British, but no perceptible demand for action.

Nevertheless Mr. Stimson was not disposed to let the results of

¹⁷ League of Nations, *Report of the Commission of Enquiry* (Geneva, 1932), p. 126. Italics inserted.

the Japanese aggression go by default. On January 7, 1932, a little over a month before the "republic" of Manchukuo made its official debut, he took a step fully in character with past American policy. He told both Japan and China:

The American Government deems it to be its duty to notify both the Government of the Chinese Republic and the Imperial Japanese Government that it can not admit the legality of any situation *de facto* nor does it intend to recognize any treaty or agreement entered into between those governments, or agents thereof, which may impair the treaty rights of the United States or its citizens in China, including those which relate to the sovereignty, the independence, or the territorial and administrative integrity of the Republic of China, or to the international policy relative to China, commonly known as the open-door policy, and that it does not intend to recognize any situation, treaty, or agreement which may be brought about by means contrary to the covenants and obligations of the Pact of Paris of August 27, 1928, to which treaty both China and Japan, as well as the United States, are parties.¹⁸

The historic American policy of supporting the integrity of China, implicit in the whole body of the treaty system involving that country, was a perfect illustration of the concepts of collective security laid down in the Covenant and the Paris Pact. The clearest justification for the policy comes from the report of the Lytton Commission.

It is quite as much in the interests of the Powers now as it was in 1922 to assist the reconstruction of China and to maintain her sovereignty and her territorial and administrative integrity as indispensable to the maintenance of peace. Any disintegration of China might lead, perhaps rapidly, to serious international rivalries, which would become all the more bitter if they should happen to coincide with rivalries between divergent social systems.¹⁹

Between the views held by the Lytton Commission and the aims of American policy there existed a close bond of sympathy. The United States had never stood for a static system in the international relations of China. It had stood consistently for a balance and for the revision of treaties. And there was nothing in Mr. Stimson's attitude in 1932 to indicate that he was opposed to a change in Sino-Japanese relations. The United States was not aiming to expel Japan from Manchuria, it was, however, in search of a better relationship. For the failure to bring that about Japan had only herself to blame.

The difference between the United States and Japan was indeed

¹⁸ Stimson, *op cit.*, pp 96-97

¹⁹ *Report of the Commission of Enquiry*, p 129

organic The United States desired eventually a free, united, and independent China as a mainstay of peace in the Far East. It expected Japan to work out her destinies with China in the same way as the other powers, that is to say, through a free, liberal system of intercourse based presumably on the historic most-favored-nation principle. The Japanese were utterly unwilling to resign themselves to the part thus cast for them. In plain terms, it meant being put into the class of secondary nations. Very reluctantly had the Western Powers accorded Nippon the privileges of a great power. Only her victories during the World War had gained her that title. Naturally even the friendliest statesmen of Japan, like Shidehara, set their faces against this attempt to turn back the clock. The "friendship policy" of the 1920's was not the same as the American policy of the open door, it was based on an assumption of Japan's special interests, on her destiny to guide and teach the Chinese, on her role of leadership in Asia. Tanaka's "positive policy" was another choice of means—the use of unlimited force instead of conciliation. Tanaka rightly singled out the United States as the leading rival; he and his fellow militarists roundly believed that they must defeat the United States if they were to achieve their ends in Asia.

The success of Manchukuo, the general world depression, and the increasing accent on violence and lawlessness in Europe encouraged the militarists of Japan to greater boldness. Civil strife and political assassination indeed grew more common in the island kingdom itself through the decade of the 1930's. The wine of easy victories in China, the manifest opportunity offered by the strife of Europe, and the indifference of the United States following the failure of 1931 all tended in the direction of maddened fanaticism in Nippon. Manchukuo in fact proved merely a beginning; by 1935 the Japanese had quietly established their ascendancy over the whole of North China. Then on July 7, 1937, taking advantage of an incident near Peking that was reminiscent of the affair in Manchuria six years before, the Japanese again attacked. This time their undisguised goal was conquest of the whole of China. First the Nationalists were forced to retreat from Peking, and the northern provinces were formally made into a puppet state. Then the Japanese attacked and captured Shanghai, leaving the French Concession and the International Settlement tender morsels to be swallowed later, Nanking fell next in 1937, followed by Hankow more than three hundred miles up the Yangtze; Canton was next on the timetable, accompanied by the lesser treaty ports along the coast. By the fall of 1938 the Japanese had the railways and the entire China coast between Canton and Manchukuo

in their grasp Chiang Kai-shek had been forced to retreat to Chungking, far in the interior of the southwest.

The tempo of violence in Europe had meanwhile increased, with the chances of an Anglo-American entente in the Far East shrinking in proportion. Unsupported abroad and hampered by short-sighted oppositions and problems of reform at home, the American government held its peace about the open door and the independence of China. Meek inquiries from Washington and London about respect for the open door and treaty rights were met by unctuous assurances in the affirmative, coincidentally the Japanese squeezed American interests out of Manchuria and as fast as they gained the upper hand in North China they repeated the process there. Meanwhile the American government continued to retreat. Its own public opinion would not help it. Trial balloons sent up by President Roosevelt and Mr. Stimson, independently of each other, in October 1937, proved this beyond the shadow of a doubt. The President in a ringing speech proposed the "quarantining" of aggressors, Stimson reproached his countrymen and the British for having a case of jitters, tore away the sham of Japanese professions, and insisted on the feasibility of combined British-American economic action against the aggressor. The few vital materials of war, he pointed out, were in the hands of the British Empire and the United States—rubber, oil, raw cotton, iron, and iron ore. More than that, practically the whole of the Japanese raw-silk export went to these two countries. It seemed like a perfect case for successful economic strangulation. But Stimson's was a vain appeal to the conscience of his country, which was now more torpid even than in 1931. The best the United States could do was to make a mild, matter-of-fact reference, in conjunction with the President's speech, to the obvious fact that Japan's actions were "contrary to the provisions of the Nine-Power Treaty."

The administration was barely able to hold its ground on immediate questions of treaty rights and the protection of American citizens. When the Japanese attacked Shanghai, it concentrated the entire Asiatic squadron in the river off the International Settlement; it also speeded reinforcements to the concessions in Tientsin and Peking, much to the alarm of the peace-at-any-price elements at home. Such persons as Representative Hamilton Fish of New York, always eager for an audience, loudly demanded the total withdrawal of the American forces at once. It turned out, however, that the administration intended not to defend the treaty rights, much less the principles of the Nine-Power Treaty, but simply to provide a means for the orderly evacuation of American citizens from China. Like

Britain and France, the United States was in full retreat. A futile international conference in Brussels in October 1937 merely advertised the fact. The British and Americans induced Belgium, one of the smallest of the treaty powers, to invite the conference. Ostensibly its purpose was to discuss ways of implementing the Nine-Power Treaty, but it shortly turned out that neither the United States nor Britain had any suggestion to make. Japan spurned the conference, and the question may be asked why the meeting was called at all.

In December 1937 some insubordinate Japanese officers deliberately attacked and sank the American gunboat "Panay," operating on the Yangtze River. Appalled by this as a direct invitation to war, the Japanese government promptly apologized and paid an indemnity. On its part, the State Department at Washington handled the unexpected crisis with dignity and skill; so speedily was the issue discharged that the public hardly had time to form an opinion. Few people understood the nexus of treaty rights and the principles that formed the crutation of a century of policy in the Far East. There was a stubborn belief that American citizens "had no business" in China anyway, and the Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, felt constrained to explain publicly why the "Panay" was sailing on the inland waters of China. No one alluded to the ultimate issues with which an unfettered Japanese program of aggression would confront the United States.

Japanese statesmanship had occasionally given voice to its ambitions. During the London Naval Conference of 1930, for example, one of her delegates mentioned Japan's future as that of "guardian of peace in the Pacific." Four years later a "spokesman" for her Foreign Office issued an elaborate statement to the press in justification of Nippon's mission in Eastern Asia. His country had meanwhile canceled its membership in the League of Nations over the question of Manchukuo, refusing to grant the League a voice in the settlement of that question. Now the same idea was applied to China as a whole. The spokesman declared.

It goes without saying that Japan at all times is endeavoring to maintain and promote friendly relations with foreign nations, but at the same time we consider it only natural that to keep peace and order in Eastern Asia we must even act alone on our own responsibility, and it is our duty to do so. At the same time there is no country but China that is in a position to share with Japan the responsibility for the maintenance of peace in Eastern Asia.²⁰

²⁰ The statement appeared in the *New York Times* of April 24, 1934.

But it was in November 1938, after they had Canton and most of the Chinese seacoast in their grasp, that the Japanese dropped the mask. The Western Powers were told they would have to "adapt their attitude to the new conditions prevailing in East Asia." Citing chapter and verse, the United States had just finished a complaint of the systematic violation of the open door in Manchuria and North China. To it in particular the Japanese replied that "in the face of the new situation fast developing in East Asia any attempt to apply to the conditions of today and tomorrow inapplicable ideas and principles of the past would neither contribute toward the establishment of real peace in East Asia nor solve immediate issues."²¹ Their response was a thinly veiled repudiation of the entire treaty system. In 1940, when their position seemed to be impregnable in China and when the United States was just awakening to the dangers it was facing from Europe, Japan openly repudiated the Nine-Power Treaty.

The basic explanation for these successive defiances lies in the preoccupation of the world with the affairs of Europe. For the sake of "peace in our time" Britain had made a humiliating surrender to Adolf Hitler on the issue of Czechoslovakia. The British had submitted in September 1938, less than two months before the Japanese formally announced their program for the "New Order of East Asia." All eyes were turned toward Europe in a vain and hopeless prayer that the sacrifice of Czechoslovakian liberty would propitiate the German tyrant. Morally the American government backed the British surrender in Europe, it made no equivalent effort to appease the Japanese, but neither did it challenge them. Fascinated by the progress of Hitler, and panicky over the possibility of involvement in Europe, the people on their part paid little heed to the now obviously punctual timetable of Japan.

Not until July 26, 1939, did the American government show a disposition to take an affirmative hand with Japan. If then denounced the Commercial Treaty of 1911 with that country, the treaty to cease to function six months from date. The move was interpreted as a gesture in the direction of imposing a general embargo on trade with Japan. It took the Japanese by surprise, but did not interrupt their timetable. On March 30 following, they repeated the tactics used successfully in Manchukuo and North China by declaring a puppet state in Central China, its capital at Nanking. Next came a statement enlarging upon the program of the "new order," which was de-

²¹ *New York Times*, November 19, 1938

scribed this time as the "Co-Prosperity Sphere of *Greater East Asia*" Japan, the foreign minister asserted, is now engaged in the task of establishing a new order in East Asia . . . The countries of East Asia *and the regions of the South Seas* are geographically, historically, racially and economically very closely related to one another. . . . The uniting of all these regions under a single sphere on the basis of common existence and insuring thereby the stability of that sphere is, I think, a natural conclusion . . . I desire to declare that the destiny of these regions—any development therein and any disposal thereof—is a matter of grave concern to Japan *in view of her mission and responsibility as the stabilizing force in East Asia*²²

Thus was sounded the warning of a new wave of conquest that was suddenly to sweep over the region of the entire western Pacific Ocean in 1941. Twenty years before, let it be recalled, the United States thought that it had established its leadership in East Asia. That leadership was premised on three interlocking treaties which established an equilibrium of power throughout the whole area embracing China and the waters of the Pacific Ocean as far east as Hawaii. It was as precisely developed a system of collective security as had perhaps yet appeared.

The flaw lay in the fact that no adequate check was placed on the single dissatisfied member, Japan. The burden of keeping the balance was thrown on China. If American statesmanship in 1921 really calculated on China's ability to meet the test, it was doomed to disappointment. The United States and Great Britain themselves had no vital interests in the region naturally marked out for Japan's first aggressions—to wit, Manchuria. The one power who was the natural opponent, Russia, was ostentatiously ignored. A revolutionary country assumed to be a menace to the internal institutions of the United States, Soviet Russia remained unrecognized until 1933. She had no part in the security system of the Washington Conference, and no efforts were made to conciliate her until two years after Japan had committed her great aggression of 1931. In failing to secure the co-operation of Russia, American statesmen of the 1920's made the fatal omission. Nor did the American people then or later comprehend that if the balance of power in the Far East was to be maintained, a working agreement with the Soviet nation was a matter of necessity. They learned this only when they themselves had been attacked at the point least expected—Pearl Harbor.

Immediately there was a wistful desire for Russian help and a

²² Quoted by Harold S. Quigley, *Far Eastern War, 1937-1941* (Boston, 1942), p. 182. Italics are inserted.

realistic appreciation of its value. The Soviet Union, however, was in no position to grant the favor, even if it so desired. Instead it had to be assisted in its own desperate struggle against Nazi Germany. The assistance was granted, and no favors were asked in return. On the other hand, since neither the United States nor Russia was in a position at that time to take the offensive against Nippon, singly or jointly, there was a real advantage in Russia's continuing at peace. Hostilities between her and Japan would have meant the quick snapping of the sea route to Vladivostok. Nevertheless, there was hope in the United States that eventually the assistance given in the defense of Soviet soil against the common enemy in the west would bring its own reward. Once the scales were turned definitely against the Germans, so it was reasoned, the Russians, to use the language of Theodore Roosevelt, would be ready "to play a return game of bowls" with the Japanese for the defeat they had suffered in 1905. With Russian co-operation once gained, the United States could be sure of full victory in the Pacific; but without that co-operation, regardless of the military outcome of the war, it was impossible to see how a satisfactory solution of the problems of Eastern Asia could be reached.

CHAPTER 25

THE SECURITY OF THE WESTERN PACIFIC, 1918-1943

ON THE MORNING of December 7, 1941, the armed forces of the Mikado suddenly and without warning swept down from the skies on the great American naval base at Pearl Harbor, Territory of Hawaii. The fruit of this brilliant though treacherous assault was the quick achievement of mastery over the entire Western ocean from Hawaii to the China coast. In rapid succession the following points fell to the Japanese: (1) the American outpost of Guam, recognized by naval men since 1898 as the strategic center between Hawaii and the Philippines; (2) the British island of Hong Kong, the sole remaining obstacle to the control of China's coastal waters since October 1938 when the Japanese had cut in behind and occupied the city of Canton, (3) the entire Malay Peninsula and the British base

of Singapore, the southwest bastion of the Pacific guarding the entrance to the Indian Ocean; (4) the Philippine Islands, including the fortified harbor of Manila, (5) the whole of the massive East Indian archipelago, known as Netherlands India, (6) British Burma and its tributary islands of Nicobar and the Andamans in the Indian Ocean, and (7) a foothold on Attu and Kiska islands, near the western extremity of the Aleutians in the far northwest corner of the Pacific.

Superb planning, familiarity with the geography and the character of the defenses of the places at which major thrusts were aimed, complete audacity and recklessness in attack, and utilization of the most modern weapons and techniques of warfare thus accomplished for the Japanese in less than six months the subjugation of an area so rich and vast that nowhere in the history of warfare could a case be found to equal it. But this was by no means all. In the three and a half years prior to the attack on Pearl Harbor the Japanese had obtained control of the principal rivers, the greater share of the railway mileage, and the whole of the coast of China from the borders of French Indo-China in the south to the boundary of Russian Siberia in the north, they had taken the Spratly Island and Hainan, the natural shield to French Indo-China from aggression by sea; taking advantage of the extremities of France, at the time under the heel of the German conqueror, they had then absorbed French Indo-China itself, and from threats to the independence of the adjoining state of Thailand they had swiftly passed to action, once the general attack on the American, British, and Dutch empires had commenced.

The zenith of Japanese ambition, openly depicted since 1938 as aimed at establishing a "Co-Prosperity Sphere in Greater East Asia," had thus nearly been reached. On the mainland of Asia the greater part of China proper was directly or indirectly in Japanese hands; only the interior provinces of the central and western sections were left to the Chinese Republic, still intact and resisting desperately from its capital at Chungking. Some succor still reached the Chinese from the West by way of India, but clearly whatever the Chinese accomplished in defeating the invader had to be done on their own resources. The Western Powers, on whose support China had long been accustomed to lean, were effectually excluded; the mass of property rights, personal privileges, and concessions which had long constituted the tangible evidence of their interests in China had vanished; and Japan had attained, at least until the scales could be turned against her, the supremacy of the Far East. She had tipped the balance wholly in her favor, she had triumphed over both the Western Powers and China.

Further Japanese advances were in the summer of 1942 checked

as follows: (1) in India and the Indian Ocean by British naval power, based upon the islands of Ceylon and Madagascar, and by the British-commanded Indian army; (2) by combined American and Australian forces which succeeded in keeping the lines of communication open between the United States and the Australian Commonwealth, and which also thwarted Nipponese efforts to capture the necessary island outposts preliminary to an invasion of the subcontinent; (3) by the Chinese army of Chiang Kai-shek, which showed no sign of collapse, (4) by an effective American defense of Midway Island, an exposed outpost of American power eleven hundred miles west of Pearl Harbor, and (5) by the American naval base at Dutch Harbor, Unalaska, some eight hundred miles east of the Japanese-held islands of the Aleutians.

These points, as it were, constituted the last line of defense on the part of the United Nations, the new international alliance of anti-Hitlerian forces; the capture of any single one of them would undermine the immediate independence and territorial integrity of them all. (1) The conquest of India and the Indian Ocean would be preliminary to a successful junction of the German-Japanese partners and the "mopping-up" by them of the unconquered portions of Europe, Asia, and Africa. (2) The breaking of the Australian-American line of defense would mean the advance of the Japanese into Australia itself, the probable conquest of that dominion and its sister, New Zealand, and the inevitable retirement of the Americans to a weak line of defense passing from Samoa in the south through the Hawaiian Islands to Dutch Harbor in the north. Forays by enemy air and sea forces to the east of this line into the waters and coastal belts of North and South America would be at the enemy's choice; their number and extent would probably be conditioned far more by the strength or weakness of his rear than by American ability to prevent the line from being pierced. Such a line, of course, is purely theoretical because it traverses more than five thousand miles of open ocean. Such efficacy as it would possess would depend upon the efficiency of cruising air and sea forces based upon the three bastions mentioned. The fall of one of these points to the enemy would facilitate the assemblage of large forces in preparation for direct thrusts at, and eventually invasion of, the American mainland itself.

It is needless to indulge in further speculation. Let us record that the actual performance of Japan within six months of her initial attack furnished a lesson in the principles of collective security as outlined but not learned in 1918. Simply stated, those principles are. (1) that there is an interrelationship among nations the world over

who are desirous of keeping the peace; (2) that security is mutual and cannot be treated by any one nation as a purely local problem; and (3) that a co-operative effort through organized international institutions is essential in peace as well as in war to the end that (a) legitimate grievances of dissatisfied nations may be corrected and that (b) nations with grievances, whether real or assumed, may be intimidated from expanding their complaints into programs of plunder, violence, and conquest. Nazi Germany, Japan's ally, had already given an almost equally brilliant lesson in the same principles on the other side of the world.¹ Singly and together Germany and Japan destroyed in 1939-41 the underpinning of the safety of all the rest of the world.

The disastrous experience of 1942 therefore begs consideration of the historical question: what was the character of the security problem in the western Pacific area prior to December 7, 1941? What was the relative sense of safety felt by the principal powers having territories or interests in this region, and how were their policies toward one another formulated with a view to maintaining the general peace? Australia and New Zealand first posed the question in the last quarter of the nineteenth century; competition among the French, Germans, and Americans for islands between Samoa on the east and New Guinea on the west aroused the fears of the older British colonies, and they clamored for the annexation to the British Empire of a chain of islands including the southeastern portion of New Guinea, the Fijis, and western Samoa. Behind this screen the British colonies, which became self-governing dominions at the turn of the century, felt reasonably secure. Nevertheless, at the outbreak of the World War in 1914 they made assurance doubly sure by over-running all of the island colonies south of the Equator that Germany had taken up. This projection of the security zone of the two British dominions was ratified by the Peace Conference of 1918, with the sole qualification that the colonies so appropriated should be conducted as mandates under the League of Nations.

So far as the United States was concerned, the security of the region scarcely became a live issue until 1918. The historic interest of the United States in this section of the ocean involved only the safety of the China route; to this had been added after 1898 the responsibility for the defense of the Philippine Islands. The Spanish Empire in the Pacific was at that time partitioned, the Germans balancing the American acquisition of Guam and the Philippines with the purchase of the remaining Spanish islands. These comprised three

¹ See chapter 26

groups north of the Equator—the Marshalls, the Carolines, and the Marianas. The Americans distrusted German intentions toward the Philippine Islands at the time of their conquest, but despite the fact that the German purchases after the Spanish-American War sat squarely astride the American route the United States interposed no obstacle to their transfer from Spain. Nor does it seem to have feared this strategic disadvantage to its route so long as Germany remained in possession.

Probably the United States appreciated the extreme exposure to which these distant German colonies were subject. They were hostages of the Anglo-Japanese alliance, which after 1902 held the peace of the western Pacific in safe keeping. Germany's inability to retain any of her possessions in the Pacific, once they were challenged by British and Japanese sea power, justified the previous American indifference to their presence. It was beyond Germany's strength to use them for purposes of aggression. The shift in the balance of power which took place in the western Pacific in 1915, however, altered the American outlook. By the withdrawal of the British naval forces, by the dependence of the British Empire upon its ally for convoy duty and patrol service as far west as Suez, and especially by the easy Japanese conquests of the German islands north of the Equator, Japan became the predominant sea power of the Far East. Secret suspicions of Japanese intentions, harbored by the American government as far back as 1905, came to life when Japan slid into the seat of Germany on the flank of the American route to China and the Philippines.

American reactions to the Japanese island acquisitions were slow—much slower than they were to the forward policy pursued by the Japanese in China. The American government protested the Twenty-One Demands in 1915 but ignored the potential freedom which expanded sea power gave to Japan to develop her policies in China. And when Viscount Ishii, the Japanese special ambassador in 1917, reached the United States, he found the Secretary of State solicitous concerning the open door in China but apathetic toward the altered naval situation in the western Pacific. Not even the knowledge, freely given by the Ambassador, that the British had agreed to Japan's keeping the islands disturbed the State Department.² Not until the Peace

² Compare the preceding chapter. Lansing knew about the island arrangement from Ishii, but he did not know that the British had agreed to give Japan a free hand in Shantung. There is no written record that he raised either question with the British during the war. This seems like a most extraordinary aberration in American diplomacy.

See Russell H. Fifield, "Disposal of the Carolines, Marshalls, and Marianas at

Conference did the American government awaken to the strategic importance of the islands. It then demanded that they, in company with other captured enemy colonies, be converted into mandates, which meant that they would be unfortified and theoretically open to the trade of all nations. It is curious to recall that Woodrow Wilson fought his battle over this issue with the two British dominions, and not with the Japanese. The latter offered no opposition to the plan for mandates, whether as a matter of discretion or one of genuine indifference it is impossible to say. The facts remain that the Japanese mandates formed a great rectangular area in the ocean, twelve hundred miles from north to south and twenty-five hundred miles from east to west; that the security system for the western Pacific which was erected after the war rested on the assumption that all of the mandatory holdings, British and Japanese, would comprise a vast neutral zone; that Japan regularly reported to the League of Nations on the condition of her mandates even after she had withdrawn from the League in 1935, but that in 1942 Japanese sea and air power combined to make an impenetrable barrier of the mandated area.

Geography and the distribution of naval power in 1918 functioned to make Japan the predominant power in the Far East. Practically speaking, the shift had taken place in the years before the war under the guise of the Anglo-Japanese alliance, in which Britain leaned more and more heavily on her partner for protecting her East Asiatic interests. West of Hawaii the American route to the Far East was unguarded; for the first time in its history the United States based a portion of its battle fleet at Pearl Harbor; but, though proposals were made to fortify Guam and the Philippines, neither Congress nor the administration was conciliatory to the idea.

Another factor, however, was designed to offset the advantages held in 1918 by Japan. During the war then ending the United States had set out to build the largest navy in the world. The expansion of the American Navy dates from 1916 at a time of intense irritation against Great Britain. Building programs laid before Congress two years later aimed at putting the United States in first place by 1925. The emphasis was on large capital ships displacing 43,000 tons, a battle line that would outdistance and outfight any other fleet in the world. Woodrow Wilson, the president who promoted the principles of collective security and who spoke so eloquently about the need for

the Paris Peace Conference," *American Historical Review*, LI (1946), 472-79. Within the American delegation there was important difference of opinion as to how to handle the issue, but the method finally chosen was the only practicable one.

reducing armaments to "the lowest point consistent with national safety," put himself at the head of the movement to build a navy bigger than the British and establish an American supremacy of the high seas. All the signs point to the conclusion that Wilson was aiming more at the British than he was at the Japanese. A devotee of "freedom of the seas" and the classical rules of American neutral rights, the offenses allegedly committed by the British on the high seas rankled in his memory. There had been bitter moments, particularly in 1916, when it seemed as though the United States would be driven into war with England.

At the end of the war Wilson had another reason for building a navy second to none. He meant to make good on the enforcement provisions of the League Covenant. But what if the aggressor should turn out to be the strongest naval power, Great Britain? The logical answer was supplied by Admiral Benson, Wilson's naval adviser at Paris: "The League of Nations must be strong enough to restrain, if necessary, its strongest member." But "no international navy made up of ships of heterogeneous types, training, language, custom, and command could hope to cope with the British fleet." The argument had force and the conclusion was obvious: the United States must have a fleet at least equal to the British. Being a satiated power, Benson added, the United States could be trusted by the League to carry out the obligations of the Covenant. Reduced to plain English, this meant that the United States would assume for itself the leading role of world judge and world policeman.⁸

Wilson's motivation at Paris appears to have been most complex. He intended to enforce "freedom of the seas" and in this respect had Great Britain chiefly in mind. In the future Britain would have to wage war on the terms and under the conditions prescribed by the United States. In the realistic sense, of course, "freedom of the seas" meant mastery of the seas on the part of the United States. But Wilson intended also to hold Japan in her place, to crowd her out of Shantung particularly, and to force her to obey the principles of Chinese independence and integrity. The mandated area gave Japan regional supremacy for the time being. But Wilson apparently expected to overcome that advantage by a concentration of naval power at Pearl Harbor.

The effect of Wilson's naval policies was to inspire both the British and the Japanese with fear and to stimulate a three-cornered naval race. The Japanese naval budget of 1921 tripled that of 1917, while

⁸ This paragraph is paraphrased from Benson's memorandum to Wilson, quoted in Ray Stannard Baker, *Woodrow Wilson and World Settlement*, III, 214-16.

the British ruefully reflected that they had overcome one rival in the Atlantic only to be faced with a larger and wealthier antagonist, on the other side of the ocean. Neither Wilson nor his successor, Harding, showed an inclination toward any alternate solution. The Executive branch of the government was clearly headed for a struggle for the command of the seas. The race, however, was averted in 1921 through the pressure of organized public opinion; a coalition of various elements among the people and in Congress, which challenged the need for the largest navy, repudiated the ambition to replace Great Britain as mistress of the seas, believed that the proper road to peace lay in the direction of disarmament, and demanded economy and reduction of taxes on the part of the federal government. The isolationist Senator, William E. Borah, sponsored the demand in Congress that an arms conference be held with Great Britain and Japan; powerful support for the cause came from the *New York Times* and from both Generals Bliss and Pershing, strong advocates of the League of Nations but not supporters of the ambition to outbuild the British navy, and the Senate refused to approve the administration's navy bill.

Just how the Harding administration felt about the matter is very obscure. It held out against the popular demand for a conference, but one need not jump to the conclusion that it favored a race with England merely for the satisfaction of winning the race. Wilson in 1918 and popular sentiment later interpreted the movement for a big navy as a gesture directed against the British. Both the British government and the British public thought likewise. Thoroughly alarmed over the situation, the First Lord of the Admiralty managed to convey privately to the American Navy Department the knowledge that Britain would abandon her traditional two-power standard and concede parity with the United States. He furthermore suggested that the two countries share the responsibility for policing the oceans between them, the United States to take the Pacific and Britain the Atlantic. The United States, let us recall, had already transferred the greater share of its fleet to the Pacific, and it is quite possible that this is the kind of a proposal for which the administration was waiting. It had had a sharp brush with the Japanese over the status of the island of Yap, one of the mandated islands which controlled the cable crossings in the Pacific. It also appears to have been eager to succeed in China where Wilson had failed. Senator Lodge, the Republican majority leader, made this clear in arguing for the big-navy bill in 1921; to make good on its China policies the United States must have the necessary capital ships. In other words, so far

as the American government was now concerned, the main motive for a big navy was the implementing of its program in the Far East. This again was not primarily a question of security for the insular possessions of the United States, but rather a determination to forbid Japan from gaining mastery on the mainland of Asia. Furthermore, by 1921 the issue of "freedom of the seas" in the Atlantic was purely an academic matter, and the Republican administration had no intention of playing policeman in Europe. In its view that responsibility should be resumed by Great Britain, while the United States would turn its attention to keeping the balance in the Far East.

There was one other point to be settled. The Anglo-Japanese alliance had been the vehicle on which Japan had ridden to power in eastern Asia. The British had carefully guarded themselves against involvement in a possible war between the United States and the Japanese; nevertheless, the alliance stood in the way of a free and independent China. In American eyes China was the right bulwark against Japan. Throughout the British Empire there was wide difference of opinion over the worth of the alliance; the public, especially in the Dominions, shared the racial dislike of the Japanese; on the other hand, men like Premier Hughes of Australia regarded China as Japan's best safety valve. If she were kept busy in Asia, she would be less likely to cast eyes on the southwest Pacific. This view was common to British statesmen, who, with the exception of Premier Arthur Meighen of Canada, were committed to a renewal of the alliance. In the imperial Conference of 1921 Meighen stood out against it. At the same time in Washington Secretary Hughes was urging the British Ambassador to get a definite decision from his government whether it intended to side with the United States or with Japan. Britain too had always paid lip service to the principle of Chinese integrity. A combination of forces finally brought the desired result, and it was understood that the United States would call a conference which would take in both the arms-limitation question and Far Eastern problems.

With British collaboration thus assured in advance, the American government issued invitations to Japan, France, and Italy as the principal naval powers and also to China. Since the Far East was to be an important subject at the conference, Belgium, who had commercial interests there, complained of the omission of herself from the list. In consequence invitations were extended to three smaller powers, Portugal, the Netherlands, and Belgium. Soviet Russia was brusquely ignored in spite of her protests. Fear of Communism ran high in both Britain and America at the time, and it was one of the favorite pleas of apologists for the Anglo-Japanese alliance that

Japan was the best possible buffer to Russia in Asia. As for Japan herself, she was well aware that one purpose of the conference was to isolate her. The Japanese were willing to talk naval limitation, but they realized the implications of the American effort to dissolve their tie with Great Britain. They could hardly afford to absent themselves from the conference, however, and a last-minute effort to get Chinese questions excluded from the agenda was simply overruled.

The Conference of the Nine Powers convened at Washington on November 12, 1921. There had been a general prayer for disarmament, echoed even in Japan, and that was the feature of the Conference that held the public interest. Two years previously the United States had seemed to be rushing into a race with Great Britain, with no issue at stake except to see who could put the biggest fleet on the ocean and run the League of Nations. Prompted by extreme navalists, like Admiral Benson, Woodrow Wilson had allowed his ambitions for world leadership to outrun his discretion. The two countries which had done the most to bring the League into existence in the hope of promoting a better world would now fight it out for the leadership of the pack! That was the logical end of the Wilsonian policies. To be sure, there was actually little danger of putting such logic into practice. The popular drift was all the other way in both countries, in each of which there spread a cry for relief from the burden of armaments and a conviction that a race was the surest road to war. Few Americans, even in the professional services, desired more than parity with England; few Englishmen cared to tease the United States into wanting more.

Secretary Hughes gave the Washington Conference at the very outset a dramatic quality that few such gatherings are privileged to enjoy. Without previous announcement or advance consultation of any sort with any other government, he pledged the United States to a program of scrapping thirty capital ships displacing a total of over eight hundred thousand tons. He then turned to the British delegation and calmly "sank" four of their new capital ships and nineteen older ones—"more than all the admirals of the world had destroyed in a cycle of centuries," as one writer described the scene. As for Japan, she was to scrap seven ships partly built and ten others. The proposal was in perfect keeping with the popular feeling in all three countries, and was received with the utmost acclaim even in Japan. Hughes proposed also a ten-year holiday on capital-ship construction and the establishment of a ratio of naval strength, based on capital-ship tonnage, of five to five for the United States and Great Britain, three for Japan, and one and three-quarters for France.

and Italy each. In actual capital-ship tonnage this meant 500,000 tons for the United States, 600,000 for Great Britain (the difference being due to the greater age of some British ships), and approximately 300,000 for Japan.

Ultimately Hughes's proposals were accepted in the face of considerable opposition from professional naval and military circles. The Japanese and French especially were affronted by what they regarded as a stamp of inferiority imposed on them by the lesser ratio. The French finally accepted with bad grace, and the Japanese were offered compensation in the form of a second treaty based upon the principal of nonaggression against each other's possessions in the Pacific. The original suggestion came from Baron Kato, the Japanese delegate, in the form of a standstill agreement on island fortifications in the Pacific. Japan had two desires: to be insulated against attack by another fleet, and to hold the naval supremacy in China waters. Both were attainable by means of a limitation on American capital ships and an agreement to leave Guam and the Philippines unfortified. If neither of these places could be used as bases, Japan would be beyond the striking power of her rival. In the United States there was as little enthusiasm to fortify Guam and the Philippines as there was to build new capital ships. Consequently Japan's proposal was well received.

The original idea was to have a three-power treaty among Japan, Britain, and the United States and to so word it as to extend the principle of nonaggression to one another's interests on the Asiatic mainland. In Japanese and British eyes this was intended to mean that the United States would not interfere with Japanese interests in China or Manchuria. Mr. Hughes would have nothing to do with this, however, and insisted on two changes. He wanted France a member of the pact, probably for appearances' sake; moreover, her presence would head off any charge that the treaty gave Britain and Japan the opportunity to outvote the United States. But the really important part of the pact had to do with its scope. Mr. Hughes limited it to the *insular possessions* of the four powers in "the region of the Pacific Ocean." The parties agreed not to attack one another's islands. The pact had the merit of giving the United States protection against attack on the Philippines or Guam without the expense of fortifying them. By definition the powers agreed that the term "insular possessions" would apply to the American islands, including the Aleutians; to the Japanese islands of Formosa (Taiwan) and the Loo Choos (now the Ryukyus); and to the British island of Hong Kong. Specifically excluded from the neutralized area were Singa-

pore on the southwest, the British Dominions and Crown Colonies south of the Equator, Hawaii and the coasts of Canada and the United States, and the Japanese "homeland," a term which apparently meant the main islands of Japan. In these areas the powers were free to increase or decrease their fortifications at will.

In sum, the Four-Power Pact, for such it came to be called, meant the extension of the neutralized zone already established in the mandated area so as to bring in those American possessions from which an offensive campaign could be conducted against Japan. Unless a fleet could be based on Dutch Harbor in the Aleutians, or on Guam and the Philippines, Japan was beyond the reach of the United States. Since majority opinion in this country at the time was strongly opposed to fortifying these places anyway, no sacrifice was apparent. What the United States really did give up was its ability to make good on its policies in China. Only overwhelming sea power could do that. True, Japan became an unwilling subscriber to the formal obligations of the Nine-Power Pact, which restated in forcible language the time-honored principles of the open door and the independence and integrity of China; but, as pointed out in the previous case, the responsibility for seeing that the treaty was enforced devolved upon China alone. In like manner the Philippines were beyond the Japanese reach, so long as Formosa and the Loo Choos were not developed as bases.

Locked together, the three treaties formed a seemingly perfect security system for the Pacific and Eastern Asia. None of the Great Powers could attack the others, provided that each respected the neutralized zone. The weakness of the whole fabric lay in the facts that geography was all in Japan's favor, that China was too frail a rod to support the balance of power alone, and that Japan was an unsatiated power with a "mission" to fulfill in China. The Japanese were left with the natural supremacy of the entire western Pacific, except on paper the Washington treaties did not weaken the preponderance of sea power in that region that they had inherited from the First World War.

In reality the United States was faced with a dilemma from which the Washington treaties offered the only escape. In common with Britain it was in search of a method for averting the threatened naval race. The public in both countries clamored for disarmament. The building of costly installations in Guam and the Philippines was not in accord with the trend of the times. It would have been branded in both Japan and the United States as a direct challenge to the former, and the American people frowned emphatically upon the offer

of such a challenge. They wanted to encourage China, but not at the sacrifice and expense of a collision with Japan. There was no imminent threat to the American island possessions, and the disposition to place confidence in Japan's good faith was widespread. Hence the resolution to follow a collective system where the use of force was made all but impossible.

Actually the Four-Power Pact contained the implications of a sort of mild substitute for the Anglo-Japanese alliance. It authorized any one of the parties to summon the others into conference in case an issue arose out of "any Pacific question." This clause was interpreted as laying the ground for a common Anglo-American front on Pacific questions, though the term was not defined and there was no suggestion that it applied to China. On the contrary, the absence of reference to China in this treaty would make it appear that the agreement was intended to apply only to the insular possessions of the respective powers. Nevertheless, the treaty attracted the suspicions of the extreme isolationists in the Senate, the same who had fought the League of Nations to a standstill. At their insistence the Senate added a reservation aimed to destroy whatever value stemmed from the consultative stipulations of the pact. The United States, it declared, "understands that . . . under the terms of this Treaty there is no commitment to armed force, no alliance, no obligation to join in any defense." If this dictum were followed literally, it would mean that the United States would loftily refuse co-operation with Britain, even though its own possessions in the Pacific were directly threatened. A more gratuitous bid to Japan to regard the western part of the ocean as her own preserve can scarcely be imagined.

The Washington treaties yielded one considerable compensation. they checked a sinister naval race between the English-speaking countries, though unfortunately they fell short of a permanent solution. Britain acknowledged the principle of parity in capital ships only, and even in that category American naval authorities complained that the treaty restrictions on replacements would keep the United States from achieving actual equality for twenty years. The tendency of the decade was to accentuate the naval rivalry with the British in technical matters and with respect to the different categories of ships, particularly cruisers. A conference held at Geneva in 1927, at which the admirals predominated in contrast to their relegation to the background at Washington, advertised the sharp sense of rivalry between the navies of the two countries. The General Board at Washington had openly set forth its demands for a navy second to none in all

types of vessels, and equipped for operations of any kind in either ocean. In general this was a challenge to the British view that the Royal Navy must have superiority in cruisers so as to defend the long lines of empire communications.

The British also remained uncertain of the American attitude in case of another European war; would the United States revert to its classic thesis of the defense of neutral rights, or would it follow the precedents of the First World War in allowing the British Navy untrammelled action against its enemies on the high seas? No one in either country could give the answer, and the question mark in Anglo-American relations weakened the British will to stand back of the collective system on the European continent. There was in fact a fundamental contradiction between the traditional American concept of freedom of the seas, meaning respect for neutral rights, and the principle of collective security being evolved from the Covenant of the League of Nations for the benefit of stabilization on the Continent. The heights of economic and naval power to which the United States had risen were factors recognized by the British as decisive in any future conflict. If the United States, a neutral in a second European war, insisted on its legal rights of trade with Britain's enemies on the Continent, the British questioned their capacity to fight a war in Europe. In 1914-18 Wilson had allowed the British a free hand on the high seas, though he and a section of the American public had complained bitterly of being bereft of their rights; at the end of the war Wilson returned belligerently to the time-honored doctrine of freedom of the seas in the name of the League of Nations. British aggressions against maritime rights, in other words, might be interpreted as a violation of the Covenant and hence might call for retaliation at the hands of the United States. Failure to join the League did not alter the situation, because the United States still paid allegiance to the nineteenth-century rules restricting blockade. Britain risked American displeasure in 1914-17, but if the United States actually achieved parity in naval strength, her position on the Atlantic would be so jeopardized as to render impossible a revival of the practices of 1914-18.

In other words, the United States, despite its alleged isolation, really held the balance of power in western Europe. The First World War had wrought a revolution in the position of this country; it was idle to suppose that the British could defy it, as they did in the Napoleonic wars, or that they would even commit themselves to defend France against German aggression without knowing in advance the attitude of the United States toward warfare on the seas. In spite

of the interrelationship of the collective system, each of the major powers persisted in treating its own interests as isolated and exclusive. The United States clung to "neutral rights"; as a makeweight in a European conflict its economic power had been proved beyond a doubt in 1914-18, now it wished to build a navy "second to none". With such a combination of forces it would have little trouble in striking the weapon of sea power from British hands and thereby determining the course of victory in a European conflict.

The public discussions of the 1920's focused upon the possibilities of an Anglo-American war, with "neutral rights" as the issue. During that decade the United States planted an enormous stake in the trade and investment of the European continent. Japan and the Orient were all but forgotten. It was these considerations that underlay the British jealousy of the American Navy, the fear of insecurity even in their own waters. The specter of neutral rights now had real claws and real teeth, and the issue was a vital one. By 1929 Senator Borah so far set aside his isolationism as to state the point: the naval controversy waited upon a comprehensive and definitive agreement respecting neutral rights. Navies were means to an end, not an end in themselves, and if Britain and the United States were to reach an understanding on the size of their respective forces, each had to know where the other stood on matters considered of vital national interest. This attempt to clarify the main issue was a distinct improvement over the contradiction in aims emphasized by Wilson. Freedom of the seas as conceived by him meant a return to the system of armed neutrality practiced by the European neutrals during the American Revolution, with the United States occupying the front seat among the armed neutrals.

Actually there was more smoke than fire in the Anglo-American naval controversy. It was tempered by the popular cry for disarmament, widely regarded during the 1920's as the universal panacea against war. Both Calvin Coolidge and Herbert Hoover accurately reflected the popular will in this respect and refused to allow the American Navy to be built up even to its treaty limits. Great Britain fell slightly below the treaty line in capital ships but advanced her cruiser construction. Japan maintained the full ratio in all categories, thereby increasing her strategic advantage in the Pacific. In 1930, nevertheless, American eyes were still focused on the British Navy, and it was with the idea of winning parity in cruisers with that nation that a third great naval conference was organized. Congress, under the lead of the committees on naval affairs which had consistently fought for a full treaty navy, laid the groundwork for getting

results from the conference. It enacted a law in 1929 requiring the President to build fifteen new cruisers of ten thousand tons each in the three successive years, but authorized him to suspend the program if limitation agreements could be made with the other powers.

The cruiser bill broke the tension. The British public repudiated the government whose policies pointed toward trouble with the United States, and supported a Labor ministry friendly to disarmament. Like his American opposite, Herbert Hoover, the new British Prime Minister, Ramsay MacDonald, was a convinced disciple of the theory that world peace depended on mutual respect for the moral order rather than on force. Both men were essentially pacifists. But it seems to have been the cruiser bill that brought results: the British volunteered to stop work on two 10,000-ton cruisers and Mr. MacDonald declared himself in favor of the parity principle for the fleets as a whole. A timely visit to the White House and the President's private camp on the Rapidan River, Virginia, was appropriately handled by the newspapers in both countries in preparation for the spirit of give-and-take that was to prevail at the conference in London the next year.

At the Conference of 1930 the spirit of the British and Americans favored submerging irritating questions of technical differences in tonnage and quality of ships to the end that the relations of the two countries might be seen in a larger perspective. Much of the stuff of the ten-year argument over parity had come from the bickerings and professional jealousies of experts and naval officers. At London these gentlemen were pushed aside in the interest of larger considerations. Parity in cruiser tonnage was conceded by the British; in company with Japan a moderate program of scrapping battle-ships and a six-year extension of the holiday on new construction were agreed to; the ratio of 5:5:3 was continued but was adjusted by 10 per cent in Japan's favor in the case of submarine and cruiser tonnage. This enabled her to increase the advantages of her supremacy in the western Pacific; but it attracted slight attention at the time. During the ten years Japan had exhibited almost model behavior in the Orient, though always building up to the treaty limits of her fleet; good feeling toward her had not been better for a long time in the United States than it was in 1930.

The principal cloud on the horizon was cast by the dogfight being waged by France and Italy over the question of parity between themselves; neither would compromise with the other, and they both left the Conference without signing the treaty. The British protected themselves against a race in naval armaments from this quarter by

means of an escalator clause, giving them the right to set aside the treaty provisions in case of competition from the Continent. The French had traditionally been the second naval power in Europe; now the Italians raised a plea for parity on the grounds of their prestige as a first-class nation and the length of their coastline. It was a specious way of covering up their ambitions in the Mediterranean, a symptom of the coming storm. The effect was to strengthen the feeling of Anglo-American solidarity and to justify the vague references of Mr. Stimson, the American Secretary of State, to the importance of focusing on matters that would bring the two countries more closely together. No attempt was made publicly to specify a bill of particulars. Nothing was done, for example, to resolve the doubt over neutral rights; the rush of events during the 1930's determined that, in company with the almost unanimous cry of execration with which the American public greeted the outrages of the European dictators. But hints were thrown out of the readiness of the two governments to promote a consultative pact—a mild way of implementing the Paris Peace Pact of 1928. The United States had championed the Paris Pact and the nation's leading isolationist, Senator Borah, had done yeoman service in its behalf. Some sixty nations agreed not to resort to war in settlement of their differences, but none had had the boldness to offer practical leadership in making the agreement function. The Anglo-American disposition in 1930 to consult together on matters of collective security was a sign, but it had to be hammered out on the anvil of flesh and steel being fashioned by the dictators. In the United States the proposal met with the same stone wall of opposition encountered eight years before by the Four-Power Pact relating to the security of the Pacific.

We return to the chief problem of this case study—the question of the security of the western Pacific. Between the Washington and London conferences this question was dormant because Japan gave no cause for complaint. The Washington treaties, let us recall, comprised a trilogy which tied together the problem of naval limitation, the security of the island possessions in the Pacific, and the principle of the integrity of China and respect for treaty rights in that country. Inevitably the treaties reflected the advantage that geography gave to Japan, though this was partly tempered by the admonitions she received to respect the position of China and by the inferior ratio in naval armaments forced upon her.

When Japan overran Manchuria in 1931 and detached it from China, she upset the equilibrium of the Washington system. Imme-

diate proof of the connection between this aggression and the general problem of the Pacific was lacking, however, though Secretary Stimson pointed out the relationship in an open letter to Senator Borah. The pledge of the United States to leave Guam and the Philippines unfortified was predicated upon the self-denying covenants of the Nine-Power Treaty respecting China. Nevertheless, the Manchurian incident was treated as a moral problem; no one, not even Mr. Stimson, had anything very definite to propose on how to bring the Japanese to book. Loose talk of a boycott on Japanese goods was heard, but few favored a general embargo on the vital exports of oil, gasoline, cotton, and scrap metal. The United States and the rest of the world were much too deep in the trough of a depression to face the sacrifices that such an embargo would mean.

This attitude of detachment on the part of the United States, tempered only by moral indignation, toward the tragedy of China continued to be characteristic of American policy through the decade of the 1930's. The steady encroachment of Japan in North China, her increasing pressure on the treaty rights of the Western Powers, her open repudiation of the Nine-Power Treaty, and even her ferocious onslaughts after 1937 against the very heart of China were met almost with a shrug. The popular inclination seemed to favor not only leaving China in the lurch and abandoning the treaty rights, but evacuating the western Pacific and retreating, if necessary, to Hawaii. The Philippines Independence Act of 1934 was so interpreted. The measure pleased the farming interests in the United States particularly, because it would rid them of the annoying competition of Philippine products. The Island people were to be piloted toward complete independence within twelve years, at the end of which time the United States would cease to be responsible for their defense. It is true that the President was empowered to promote an international agreement for the neutralization of the Islands; but clearly there was no intention of permitting him to negotiate an armed alliance to defend them. Considering the Japanese activities on the mainland and the veiled announcements from Tokyo of the right to rule the Pacific, such pious gestures unsupported by force were futile. Committed apparently to withdrawal, the American government set itself to the task of training a native draft army capable of standing off an invasion. This was as far as the public at home, passionately devoted to isolationism, would allow it to go.

This is not the place to examine the isolationist obsession that held the American public spellbound during the decade of the 1930's. Pathological in its devotion to the empty slogan of "Keep out of

war!" the public was fascinated and frightened by the growing spectacle of violence and lawlessness in Europe. Its education in the strategy of the western Pacific was yet to come. Pearl Harbor proved to be the best teacher. China's sorrows were treated as moral issues, painful to most Americans but pointing no object lesson in international politics. Generally speaking, the treaty rights and investments in China were held in contempt. Their monetary value was known to be scanty and hardly worth defending, but the public refused to accept any other practical reason for going to China's assistance. Furthermore, Japan shared in the sympathy loudly expressed by the pacifists and "intellectuals" for Germany and Italy as "have-not nations." It was the unfailing excuse for the lawlessness of the dictators. There was a faint consciousness of American dependence on the rubber and tin of the East Indies, and some uneasiness over the possibilities of Japan's attacks in their direction. It was usually silenced, however, by the easy confidence in the magic of South American resources and by the assurance that, even if Japan should conquer the Indies, she would have to sell the products anyway. The popular imagination simply rejected pictures of the opportunities for world conquest open to Nippon, once such an aggregation of natural wealth and power as only the East Indies could offer was within her clutches.

Such in brief was the general popular estimate of the situation—skepticism, faint-heartedness, a deep sense of futility shared even by the most ardent friends of China, a complacent belief that Japan's strength was limited, and a false sense of American national security. There were a few indications that the United States did not plan an abject withdrawal. One was the reiterated firmness with which the American government greeted each new Japanese aggression, its consistent refusal to recognize changes brought about by violence. Such announcements of policy, approved by the American public, infuriated the Japanese without defeating them. A second was the establishment of an air-mail and passenger route to the Orient in 1936 via Midway, Wake, Guam, and the Philippines, leading directly over the unfriendly waters of the Japanese mandates. A third was the ostentatious "colonization" of a group of small islands and atolls in the Phoenix archipelago in the South Pacific in 1937, followed by a window-dressing agreement with Great Britain for joint occupation. The location of these atolls suggested the establishment of an alternate air route to Australia and the East Indies in case the Japanese cut off the direct line.

Most important of all, however, was the naval rearmament pro-

gram inaugurated by the Roosevelt administration in 1933. For the first time since the Washington treaties the duty of building up the Navy to treaty limits was undertaken. The pace was accentuated greatly in 1936. Japan had given formal notice that she intended to repudiate the ratio system. At a third great naval conference held in London early in the year she demanded full parity with Britain and the United States. This was of course refused, and the Japanese delegation walked out of the conference just as they had done three years before from the League of Nations. Britain and the United States then reached a limitation agreement between themselves, confirming the principle of parity in all categories of ships and limiting the battleship to 35,000 tons. Persistent rumors that Japan was secretly building two ships of 45,000 tons brought inquiries but no satisfactory information. Consequently even this limitation had to be abandoned, and the naval appropriation bills enacted successively in 1937, 1938, and 1939 provided sums that satisfied the fondest wishes of the Navy Department. The act of 1939 called for an outlay of \$1,300,000,000 on 127 ships within four years. At the end of that period the American Navy was scheduled to possess a global tonnage of 2,154,000.

Conspicuous at the London Conference of 1936 and thereafter was the growing rapprochement between the British and American governments. The bickering of the 1920's had given way to teamwork, as close as the jealous watch of American isolationists would permit. Letters were publicly exchanged at the end of the Conference declaring that the two countries would not engage in competitive building, and each government thereafter regarded additions to the other's fleet as increased security for itself. In so far as domestic politics would allow, the static conceptions of the Washington system were repudiated. In February 1938 three American cruisers put in an appearance at the formal opening of the completed British base at Singapore, a gesture showing that the American government appreciated the common interest in the southwest Pacific. Nothing adequate was accomplished by either power, however, to overcome the advantages long held by Japan. The British were unequal to equipping and maintaining the separate fleet for which the Singapore base was intended, the Americans succeeded in increasing the defenses of the Philippines, but they failed to fortify Guam. A bill to accomplish this purpose was debated in Congress in 1939, after the European war had begun; it was strongly endorsed by the administration and by the Naval Affairs Committees of both houses; but the majority drew back from the obvious challenge intended for Japan,

and the measure was beaten. Without a heavily fortified Guam it was out of the question to hold the route to the Philippines. By 1939 it was definitely too late so much as to try.

The rapid advance of Japanese arms in China must now be recalled. Hankow and Canton were in their clutches by October 1938, followed almost immediately by the public pronouncement of the Greater East Asia doctrine. Seizure and occupation of the large island of Hainan, of the Paracels and of the Spratly Island in the China Sea early in 1939, and negotiation of a suspicious nonaggression treaty with Thailand put Japan in a position to move into French Indo-China at her own pleasure. Once France was prostrated in Europe, this was easily consummated. The abject regime at Vichy was cornered in September 1940 into admitting the Japanese into "protective occupation" of the northern part of that colony; this was followed in July 1941 by surrender of the remainder. The Japanese were admitted to the French naval base at Cam Ranh, eight hundred miles distant from Hong Kong, Manila, and Singapore, and given the privilege of erecting air bases along the coast and anywhere within the provinces. The outlines of the "Co-Prosperity Sphere of Greater East Asia," which the Japanese Foreign Office had already taken pains to announce, were now assuming definite form. Necessary for filling in the picture were British Malaya and Singapore, now immediately open to invasion by land, by sea, and from the air; Hong Kong and the tenuous foreign concessions completely at the mercy of the Japanese in China; the Philippine Islands, and the greatest prize of all—Netherlands India.

Meanwhile nothing stronger than warning statements had come from Washington in attempts to check this onrush. Half-hearted efforts to bolster China had commenced as far back as December 1938 with the extension of direct government loans to that beleaguered country; furthermore, at the request of the Department of State, American aircraft producers had refused to supply the Japanese with planes. But the real weapon in the American armory, the embargo on the great raw materials of war, remained unused. Even after the abrogation of the Commercial Treaty in January 1940 the American administration made no move in this direction. This was before the great catastrophies in Europe had commenced, and the reasons for this failure to act against the Japanese can only be surmised. An effective embargo could be consummated only with the full co-operation of the Dutch and British, and it is not clear that either was disposed to co-operate at that time.

The initiative still remained in the hands of Japan and her Axis

partners On September 16, 1940, coincident with the advance into northern Indo-China, she announced the conclusion of the Triple Alliance with Germany and Italy. The latter recognized her leadership in the New Order of East Asia in return for her recognition of theirs in Europe They also undertook "to assist one another with all political, economic and military means when one of the contracting parties is attacked *by a power at present not involved in the European war or in the Sino-Japanese conflict*."⁴ The alliance was an attempt to intimidate the United States. Its announcement followed shortly after the Anglo-American exchange of destroyers for island bases in the Atlantic, and it was commonly supposed to operate to the advantage of Hitler by diverting American anxiety to the Pacific The probability is, however, that Nippon hoped to gain as much from the pact as the Nazis, by warning the United States against lending a hand to China The agreement had no effect on American policy in either ocean. The Atlantic was traditionally the ocean of greater interest, and American assistance to Great Britain was accelerated in due course Japan furthermore let it be known that she intended to put her own meaning on the word "attack"; neither the passage of the Lend-Lease Bill nor even the unofficial shots exchanged between American destroyers and German submarines in the North Atlantic budged her from her position, though Germany hastened to complain that she had been "attacked"

The completion of the Japanese occupation of French Indo-China at the end of July 1941 was the signal for action from Washington The administration at last clamped down on Japanese credits in American banks, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands East Indian government followed suit almost immediately. Then came the long-overdue embargo on oil, raw cotton, and scrap metal, while American tankers continued to move audaciously through Japanese waters en route to Soviet Russia. The next move was up to Japan This came in the sending of a special representative, one Saburo Kurusu, to collaborate with the regular Japanese Ambassador, Admiral Nomura, in an apparent effort to persuade the United States to alter its policy. Whether the Japanese were so very credulous as to suppose that, by offering a dubious modification of their own aggressions, they could beguile the American government into a retreat or whether, as seems much more likely, the Kurusu mission was the merest temporizing device, intended to postpone the outbreak of hostilities until Japan had perfected her preparations for attack

⁴ *New York Times*, November 10, 1941, p. 3 Italics inserted.

is a problem which only a disclosure of the secrets of the Mikado's war machine can resolve.

Kurusu and Nomura on November 20, 1941, proposed the following: (1) Japan and the United States to agree not to send any armed force into *any* of the regions of southeast Asia and the southern Pacific *except* the part of Indo-China already occupied by Japanese; (2) Japan to withdraw its forces from Indo-China upon the restoration of peace with China or the "establishment of an equitable peace in the Pacific area"; (3) Japan and the United States to co-operate in getting from Netherlands India the commodities they each need; (4) restoration of full commercial relations between Japan and the United States, including a stipulation that "The Government of the United States shall supply Japan a required quantity of oil"; (5) the United States to "refrain from such measures and actions as will be prejudicial to the endeavors for the restoration of general peace between Japan and China."⁵ Subsequent to the making of these proposals reports reached Washington that Japanese reinforcements were arriving in Indo-China in excess of the number designated in the Japanese agreement with Vichy. The Axis Powers had a reputation for maneuvers like this—it was their way of announcing their intention to attack, Washington needed now to be on its guard.

On November 26 the American government presented the following counter proposals: (1) Japan and the United States to negotiate a multilateral nonaggression pact to include the British Empire, China, Japan, the Netherlands, the Soviet Union, Thailand, and the United States; (2) the American, British, Chinese, Japanese, Dutch, and Thai governments to pledge themselves to respect the territorial integrity of French Indo-China and to consult together immediately if any threat to Indo-China developed; (3) Japan to *withdraw all military, naval, air, and police forces from China and from Indo-China*; (4) neither government to support "*—militarily, politically, economically—any government or regime in China other than the National Government of the Republic of China with capital temporarily at Chungking*"; (5) both governments to give up all extraterritorial rights in China, including rights in international settlements and concessions, and to persuade the British and other governments to do likewise; (6) both governments to enter into a reciprocal most-favored-nation trade treaty and to lift the freezing restrictions the one against the other.⁶

⁵ Quoted and paraphrased from *The Department of State Bulletin*, V (No. 130, December 20, 1941), 540.

⁶ *Ibid.* (No. 129, December 13, 1941), pp. 463-64. Italics inserted.

Simply stated, the Japanese proposals called for an American recognition of the New Order on the basis of the existing status quo. For the price of an unlimited free hand in China the United States was offered a sort of pledge, the value of which could be left to the credulous, that Japan would commit no further aggressions outside of China. To that extent the Japanese alleged they would cancel the New Order. On its part the United States summoned Japan to repudiate the triumphs of the past ten years and retire from China altogether. No ultimatum was given, nor was any threatening language used; but it was clear that the two countries had arrived at the end of the road.

On the afternoon of December 7 the two Japanese presented themselves once more at the Department of State. The communication they handed to Mr. Secretary Cordell Hull read in part as follows.

It is the immutable policy of the Japanese Government to insure the stability of East Asia and to promote world peace. . . .

Ever since China Affair broke out owing to the failure on the part of China to comprehend Japan's true intentions, the Japanese Government has striven for the restoration of peace and it has consistently exerted its best efforts to prevent the extension of war-like disturbances. . . .

However, both the United States and Great Britain have resorted to every possible measure to assist the Chungking regime so as to obstruct the establishment of a general peace between Japan and China, interfering with Japan's constructive endeavors toward the stabilization of East Asia. . . . When Japan in accordance with its protocol with France took measures of joint defence of French Indo-China, both American and British Governments, wilfully misinterpreting it as a threat to their own possessions, and inducing the Netherlands Government to follow suit, they enforced the assets freezing order, thus severing economic relations with Japan. *While manifesting thus an obviously hostile attitude, these countries have strengthened their military preparations perfecting an encirclement of Japan, and have brought about a situation which endangers the very existence of the Empire.*

. . . As for the China question which constitutes an important subject of the negotiation, the Japanese Government showed a most conciliatory attitude. As for the principle of non-discrimination in international commerce, . . . the Japanese Government expressed its desire to see the said principle applied throughout the world, and declared that along with the actual practice of this principle in the world, the Japanese Government would endeavor to apply the same in the Pacific area including China. . . .

On the other hand, the American Government, always holding fast to theories in disregard of realities, and refusing to yield an inch on its impractical principles, caused undue delay in the negotiation. . . .

The American Government, obsessed with its own views and opinions, may be said to be scheming for the extension of the war. While it seeks, on the one hand, to secure its rear by stabilizing the Pacific Area, it is engaged, on the other hand, in aiding Great Britain and preparing to attack, in the name of self-defense, Germany and Italy, two Powers that are striving to establish a new order in Europe. Such a policy is totally at variance with the many principles upon which the American Government proposes to found the stability of the Pacific Area through peaceful means. . . .

It is impossible not to reach the conclusion that the American Government desires to maintain and strengthen, in coalition with Great Britain and other Powers, its dominant position it has hitherto occupied not only in China but in other areas of East Asia. It is a fact of history that the countries of East Asia for the past hundred years or more have been compelled to observe the status quo under the Anglo-American policy of imperialistic exploitation and to sacrifice themselves to the prosperity of the two nations. The Japanese Government cannot tolerate the perpetuation of such a situation since it directly runs counter to Japan's fundamental policy to enable all nations to enjoy each its proper place in the world. . . .

All the items demanded of Japan by the American Government regarding China such as wholesale evacuation of troops or unconditional application of the principle of non-discrimination in international commerce ignored the actual conditions of China, and are calculated to destroy Japan's position as the stabilizing factor of East Asia The attitude of the American Government shatters the very basis of the present negotiation

Obviously it is the intention of the American Government to conspire with Great Britain and other countries to obstruct Japan's efforts toward the establishment of peace through the creation of a new order in East Asia, and especially to preserve Anglo-American rights and interests by keeping Japan and China at war. This intention has been revealed clearly during the course of the present negotiation. . . .

The Japanese Government regrets to have to notify hereby the American Government that in view of the attitude of the American Government it cannot but consider that it is impossible to reach an agreement through further negotiations.⁷

The spontaneous reply uttered by Mr. Hull to this memorandum will probably become a classic: "In all my 50 years of public service I have never seen a document that was more crowded with infamous

⁷ *Department of State Bulletin*, V (No 129, December 13, 1941), 466-70. I have italicized the sentences which seem to sum up the case of Japan versus the United States and the British Empire. With some substitution of the words "Europe" and "Atlantic" for "East Asia" and "Pacific" this document could be made to fit the German plea for the New Order in Europe.

falsehoods and distortions—infamous falsehoods and distortions on a scale so huge that I never imagined until today that any Government on this planet was capable of uttering them." At the moment this was said, but unknown to Mr. Hull, the great war had commenced. True to her traditions, Japan had already struck without warning at Pearl Harbor. And nine months later Ambassador Joseph C. Grew, returned from exile in Tokyo, summed up the spirit of the war in these words:

Let us put it in a nutshell: there is not sufficient room in the area of the Pacific Ocean for a peaceful America, for any of the peace-loving United Nations, and a swashbuckling Japan.⁸

The heart of the Pacific problem is China—the determination of the United States to enforce its principles in behalf of that country's independence, partly for idealistic reasons but chiefly for the sake of building up a bulwark on the other side of the ocean capable of serving the interests of American national security; the resolve of the Japanese, on the other hand, to subject China to their will and erect a great Asiatic empire from which the Western Powers would be excluded. Barring the road to the Japanese objective stood the collective system of the Washington treaties, fashioned by the United States. Geography and sea power were more potent factors than treaties, however, and in due course Japan used them to her advantage. Until July 1941 it appeared that the United States would do nothing effective to stop her. But with the occupation of French Indo-China a new phase of the struggle in the Far East commenced. The immediate security of the Philippines and of the vital area of Malaya and the Dutch East Indies was at stake. Either an attempt must be made to defend them, or the whole of Greater East Asia must be allowed to pass to Japan by default. That meant the erection of a great military empire, in probable contact with the German empire in the West, capable of pushing the United States back into the confines of its own continent and ordering the world according to its own concepts of national aggrandizement. In such a world there would be no place for a free and powerful America.⁹

⁸ *Ibid.*, VII (No. 166, August 29, 1942), 720.

⁹ The story of the war in East Asia and the Pacific is carried forward to its conclusion in chapter 26 as an integral part of World War II.

CHAPTER 26

THE SECOND WORLD WAR, 1939-1945

THE FIRST WORLD WAR suggested the need for a collective system capable of arousing a sense of responsibility among the nations for keeping the peace. American statesmanship not only initiated the League but contemplated the United States as its future champion. The manner in which this aspiration was frustrated has been described in the previous chapter on the Paris Peace Conference. Lessons in collective security in 1920 proved to be more of a faith than a reality. The American public was not sufficiently convinced of the need. Plainly the war had not driven home its lessons. Britain and France again had the balance of power firmly in their grip and the United States could afford to resume its policy of isolation. Only in the Pacific had the power relationship definitely shifted—Japan had put the United States on its guard. In 1921 the American government responded aggressively by organizing a collective system for that region and edging its rival there into membership in it.

The American position in relation to Europe was not the duplication of 1914 that it superficially appeared to be, however. Financially it was the reverse; the United States was now a gigantic creditor, in contrast to its earlier and historic status of debtor to Europe. The Allied Powers had a problem in redeeming the seven billion dollars in bonds they had given in payment for American supplies during the war. In addition Europe needed capital for reconstruction; several major governments on the Continent were willing to offer 7 per cent or more. Their bank accounts swollen by an unexcelled wave of prosperity during the 1920's, American investors continued to meet this demand, additional billions in private capital were poured into Europe, and into Latin America, Australia, and Asia as well. The decade witnessed one of the greatest speculations in foreign and domestic securities that the world had ever seen.

Realistically the financial relations of debtor and creditor were the same, regardless whether the loan came from the private investor or from the United States government. The latter had furnished the capital to its European allies during the eighteen months in which it was at war; in addition it supplied three billions after the war, which were spent for reconstruction. The combined sums, amounting to about ten billion gold dollars, constituted the so-called "war debts,"

the greatest share of which had gone for munitions and supplies purchased in America. Over the whole lending period from 1915 to 1929 the American private investor more than matched the capital loaned by his government. A portion of this was reflected in exports from the United States, all of it loaned while the Allies were at war, and the remainder was spent on the rebuilding of industry in Europe itself. The problem that baffled every European country was how to find the dollars necessary to meet the mounting interest and amortization payments on its American debts. The "war debts" became a political issue; the private debts did not. The former fanned popular hatred on both sides of the ocean; like Calvin Coolidge, the average American saw only the dollar sign and shrugged his shoulders over the difficult problem of international payments; the average European, burdened with taxes and an inflated currency, grumbled bitterly about "Uncle Shylock."

Great Britain, followed by the Continental debtors, made regular payments in gold under a series of funding agreements negotiated early in the 1920's. Far from working a cure, however, this form of payment only aggravated the problem; it stimulated the fever in this country for speculation in foreign bonds. Blindly the United States refused to follow the rules prescribed for a good creditor; thrice during the 1920's it built its tariff walls higher, thus hampering and eventually destroying the only sound means of international payment in the form of goods and services. By 1929, the financial relationship had become so unbalanced as to make disaster a certainty; more than twenty-one billion dollars were owing. The colossal Smoot-Hawley tariff was the last straw; it brought retaliation in Europe, the speculative bubble burst in October, and debt payments from abroad, on both the private obligations and the "war debts," tapered off to almost nothing. Only the sour looks and the impulse to call names were left. In 1934 a measure useful only as an exhibition of the spleen of its authors issued from Congress—the Johnson Act, which prohibited private citizens from lending money to governments which had defaulted on their "war debts." Except as an expression of spite against the former allies of the United States, the act was innocent of meaning. It took no account of the widespread default of other nations, in South America for example, and of course it had no cure for the serious economic disease which had infected the entire world.

Fundamentally the altered financial position of the United States at the close of the war was symptomatic of the immense power that the country was capable of wielding. But unfortunately the attitude

on the war debts was characteristic of the general failure of the American public to appraise the responsibilities the United States would ultimately be obliged to assume toward pressing problems of peace and order in the world. In 1918 the United States had successfully redressed the balance of power against German threats of world domination, that had been its immediate war aim, but its larger purpose had been to introduce a new order in the world based on a collective interest in keeping the peace, by force if necessary. It was elementary with the men of 1918 that success in this effort rested on the continued solidarity of the three powers that had won the war, Britain, France, and the United States. The makers of the League Covenant were conscious of acting in the interests of American security. That was the lesson which their successors so hastily repudiated. Appearances after 1918 were deceiving; the victory was so crushing that the German menace seemed to have been dispelled for good. Republican leaders of the 1920's felt entirely safe in retreating into the country's traditional isolation, having no doubt of the British and French ability to control the Continent. Toward Soviet Russia they indulged in an attitude of studied hostility. So long as Germany remained weak and Central Europe disintegrated, they had little incentive for behaving otherwise.

It is not to be assumed, however, that the United States was satisfied with the manner in which Britain and France managed the League and dominated the Continent. Gratuitous advice flowed continuously from an American public much more sensitive to European conditions than in 1914. In general the criticism focused on the British and, especially, the French disposition to maintain the status quo at the expense of the ideals to which the Allies had pledged themselves during the war. Having shaken off the responsibility for assisting in world reform, American opinion felt free to pass lofty moral judgments on the selfishness of its former associates. The issue which attracted particular comment was disarmament. Disarmament was accepted almost universally in the United States as the true panacea against war. Herbert Hoover, a president especially zealous in behalf of this cause, openly complained of the seeming hypocrisy of nations that spent large sums on armaments and yet shrank from meeting their debts. But Hoover had not the slightest interest in checking the wave of speculation in foreign securities that crested during his administration. Far from shedding light on the realities of international problems, Hoover only contributed to the popular bewilderment and ill-will. He put no check on the widespread promotion of the sale of dubious foreign securities; on the contrary, he

did all he could to push the export of American goods, payment for which was tendered from the proceeds of the bond sales in America.

Nor was there the simple connection between the French outlay on armaments and the capacity to pay war debts that Hoover encouraged his countrymen to believe. Armaments represented an investment in terms of francs on goods and labor produced and consumed in France; they created no problem in foreign exchange. Americans could not expect the French to be impressed with the argument against armaments as a cause of war. Universal service and a standing army were the traditional instruments of security for a country facing more populous rivals across artificial frontiers. If the French were at fault, the Americans were equally so. Isolation, based on geography and the existing balance of power, was the traditional American method. Plainly each nation forsook the proposed new order in favor of tested tradition, and the United States was the first one to do so.

Recrimination over war debts and disarmament, mutual chiefly between France and the United States, was a token of the forces which kept the world disunited. Sharp trade rivalry and ill feeling over the size of their respective navies kept the British and Americans apart in much the same manner. Britain and France, of course, kept the League going, although their domination of it was greatly to the American distaste, they even secured the temporary reconciliation of Germany, and for a few brief years the League functioned as a true collective system. During this period even the United States showed considerable enthusiasm for it through the support it gave to the several nonpolitical activities conducted by the Geneva organization. There was a small but influential minority in the United States which remained true to the principles of collective security. All three Secretaries of State—Hughes, Kellogg, and Stimson—in the Republican administrations had been League of Nations men in 1919; Hughes displayed considerable timidity, but Kellogg and Stimson at least helped the League to the limit of their ability. One may conclude that the Department of State was consistently ahead of public opinion in this respect. But efforts to explore possible roads back to the program of 1918 had to be pursued most cautiously. The philosophy of isolationism held the people spellbound. Even such modest attempts at international co-operation as a movement to join the World Court met with defeat.

The closest the United States came to the collective system was in 1928, when it seized the initiative in negotiating at Paris an "anti-war pact," which most of the other nations of the world agreed to

This was the famed Kellogg Pact, which really originated with Professor James T. Shotwell of Columbia University. The central meaning of the pact was the pledge to "renounce war as an instrument of national policy" and to settle disputes only by pacific means. Professor Shotwell had in mind the setting up of a minimum international obligation to which all nations, members of the League or not, could subscribe. With this as a point of departure, he felt, the United States could officially declare itself toward a nation that violated its pledge.

The Kellogg Pact caught the imagination of the American public and even divided the isolationists concerning its merits. William E. Borah displayed the greatest enthusiasm for the treaty and piloted it through the Senate without a single reservation. He felt certain the moral obligation was enough: no government, having given its pledged word to settle the dispute by pacific means, would dare now to resort to force. It would not dare defy the organized moral sentiment of mankind. This opinion appears to have reflected the general popular view which wheeled the treaty through the Senate with almost a unanimous vote. It crystallized the conception of an "aggressor nation" as one which refused to come into conference or otherwise settle its quarrel peacefully. "Here is a method," said Borah, ". . . by which to test any government which might be acting not in good faith under the treaty, and to place it in a position before the world where it would be practically impossible to defend its course or conduct."¹ The distinction in fact was one inherent in the League method; the Kellogg Pact simply underscored it.

By indirection the Kellogg Pact dealt a heavy blow at American isolationism. It accustomed the public to thinking in terms of the difference between the aggressor and his victim and to expecting the government to do likewise. Like Woodrow Wilson, Borah really believed that the appeal to "a decent respect to the opinions of mankind" would be enough to stay any aggressor. He lived to learn otherwise, but not to alter his view against implementing the pact. Shrewder men than he saw that if the pact were to mean anything, it had to be accompanied at least by consultation among the powers in case any state repudiated it. Practical politics kept from the text of the treaty any hint that it created an obligation to consult; the United States was free to act or not to act under it, just as it had been before. Agitation during the ensuing four years in favor of a formal consultative pact to supplement the Kellogg treaty reached

¹ Quoted by D. F. Fleming, *The United States and World Organization, 1920-1933* (New York, 1938), p. 300.

such proportions that it got the endorsement of both political parties in the presidential campaign of 1932.

Once in office, the Roosevelt administration thought it "good politics" to bury the proposal; but the Kellogg Pact, nevertheless, had already been used. Mr. Stimson had set the precedent first in 1929, when he reminded Russia and China of their pledge during a border quarrel, and he made the Pact a major instrument of American policy in 1931 in an effort to stop the aggressions of Japan. For a while in that year the Secretary of State had given the widest sweep to the treaty; with only the feeblest protests from the isolationists he virtually put himself at the head of the League in the hope of galvanizing that body into action. He even hoped to use it as a means of employing sanctions against Japan. From this extremity the chief League members recoiled, however; and the American public, while responding enthusiastically to the proposal, were hardly aware of the sacrifices they would have been called on to make had it really been put into effect.

The moral sanction was put into practice through the doctrine of nonrecognition which the United States had formerly utilized against undesirable governments in Latin America. Mr. Stimson brought it to bear on the Japanese puppet state of Manchukuo, and he persuaded the members of the League of Nations to do the same. The precedent was important in defining an attitude which the American government reaffirmed consistently in subsequent years. Italy and Germany were in their turn marked with the same brand of aggression as Japan; and however loath they were to try more forceful measures, the American people readily endorsed their government's refusal to recognize the repeated acts of lawlessness for which the names of Hitler and Mussolini soon were to become bywords.

There were three great areas of conflict during the 1930's, each with a background in the previous World War. The one centering in eastern Asia has already been discussed in connection with its relationship to American security. The other two were in the Mediterranean and in Central Europe, respectively. Under Mussolini Italy revived her hope of aggrandizement in the Mediterranean, which had been dashed in 1918. The Italian dictator made no secret of his ambition to convert the Middle Sea into an Italian lake: he not only proclaimed it openly, but he took the steps necessary to bring it about. In 1935 he invaded and subjugated Ethiopia, thus creating an Italian colony able to threaten Egypt from the rear and to challenge the British control of the route through the Red Sea.

His next move was to intervene in Spain in 1936; civil strife in that country gave the opportunity to help one party, the Fascists, on such a scale that Spain would become a virtual puppet of Italy. Mussolini in fact all but took over the war in Spain, with some help from Germany, but though his aid probably was decisive he nevertheless failed to become the master of Spain. He did not even compel General Franco, the man who had profited from his assistance, to enter a treaty of alliance. The outcome of this adventure established one point: alone and dissociated from other scenes of conflict, Italy was incapable of wresting the Mediterranean from the British and French, who had shared its control for the period of a century.

The third and by far the most ominous threat of all came from Germany. Under Hitler the Nazis perfected the blueprints for world domination drawn by the Pan-Germans of the previous generation. the preparation of the entire German population for war, the creation of a Great Germany in the heart of Europe, armed with the manpower, the material resources, and the strategic positions which would give it command of the Continent and the use of air power as a means of nullifying the natural advantages possessed by British sea power. Once he achieved supremacy in the air, Hitler could undermine Britain's independence, perhaps even conquer her, and reduce her to the position of a German province in fact if not in name. That would give him the master key to world power that he so avidly desired.

Hitler's tactics show that he expected to succeed by intimidation, by exploiting the disunity among the former Allies, by playing on their fears of war, and by making specious appeals to their consciences concerning the mistakes of the Versailles Treaty. The complete regimentation of Germany for war on a scale unapproached in any other country was to bring victory without actually striking a blow. Germany's enemies would be so confused, divided, and helpless that they would not dare call a halt. The regime was completely unaffected by considerations of morality or good faith. If a pledge not to attack or a proffer of an alliance could be used to deceive or distract another country even temporarily, it was freely given only to be broken on the instant that it ceased to serve the interests of the German Reich. No power was more prolific in the making (and breaking) of nonaggression pacts with its neighbors than was Germany.

The complete lack of solidarity among Great Britain, France, and the United States and the isolation of Soviet Russia were the fundamental factors in Hitler's successes. Of the three Western countries

the French alone identified the security of Germany's neighbors to the east with their own; they had binding alliances with Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Rumania. Nevertheless, the French were torn among themselves and pitifully anxious for peace. They realized too well that without at least British support, they could not grapple successfully with Nazi Germany. By building the Maginot Line of fortifications along their northern frontier they showed they had no intention of pursuing an aggressive policy toward Germany.

In England the situation was even more doubtful. Hitler was disliked there unanimously, but the Treaty of Versailles was unpopular too. To make excuses for the Nazis was for a while almost an act of conscience. Furthermore, there was an important section of British opinion that openly preached appeasement. The dominant wing of the Conservative Party feared the spread of Russian Communism, and it tended to echo the Nazis' loud denunciations of the Soviet Union. Germany was regarded as a bulwark against Communist pressure from the east. Under Neville Chamberlain the British government followed this line of policy to the very brink of disaster. It had never been willing to join the French in guaranteeing the integrity of Germany's eastern neighbors, in this respect being scarcely less isolationist than the United States. Many British and some Americans openly expressed the opinion that Germany ought to become the master of the European Continent, that National Socialism was the only bulwark against Communism, and that Germany alone had the capacity to maintain the peace. The Nazi conception of world empire, frankly discussed in Hitler's *Mein Kampf* and popularized on countless maps circulated throughout Germany, was almost everywhere taken with a grain of salt. If the Germans were granted a free hand in eastern Europe, so it was assumed, they would leave the rest of the world alone. These beliefs the Chamberlain government acted upon through the great crisis at Munich in September 1938. Hitler was given an advance signal that he might annex Austria, which he did in March, following this with the annexation of the Sudetenland of Czechoslovakia. Both of these steps were taken on the plea of the common German nationality of the people of these regions. What was overlooked was the fact that Austria and the Sudetenland were strategically the heartland of Europe; once they were under his thumb, Hitler could make short shrift of Poland and the countries of the Danube.

It was too late at Munich to retrieve the ground lost during the previous years. Czechoslovakia had been weakened beyond repair and the most strategic and industrially valuable territory in Europe

delivered into German hands. With it went the balance of power and the traditional leadership which Britain had exercised over European affairs. There was a definite war crisis, encouraged by past successes and the wide margin of his military superiority, Hitler pushed his demands beyond the limit of the original bargain. In pursuing the dangerous policy of appeasement the British had failed to attend to their own rearmament. German air power, the new and terrifying factor in military affairs, had more than a fifty per cent advantage over the Royal Air Force. This factor, plus the shudder at the prospect of another terrible war that ran through two nations that had not forgotten their sacrifices in the last, decided the issue. Hitler now had the lead; an empty promise to commit no more aggressions was all that he gave in exchange.

The Munich surrender was determined by the attitude of Great Britain. France was a follower, pathetically relieved that British diplomacy had saved her the embarrassments of her treaty obligations to Czechoslovakia. The crisis marked the re-entry of the United States into European affairs. The gravity of that crisis was universally recognized, and it drove every other thought from the American mind. President Roosevelt sent two messages in quick succession to Hitler, and he lined up Mussolini on the side of compromise. The issue was really not one of making a stand against the German; the Czechs alone showed confidence in their defenses, and all they needed was solid support from the Western Powers. But the British government had already warned them not to expect its help, and American diplomacy took the same line. Hitler was told he would get what he wanted if only he would be patient. But he did not have long to wait: his timetable called for Czech evacuation of the Sudetenland by October; two days previously the Allies formally signified their accord, and the Czechs were granted a delay of ten days in which to complete their withdrawal. It was an ominous exhibition of the weakness of the Western Powers, a final proof of Britain's inability to hold the balance, and a tempting invitation to Hitler and his Axis partners to still greater boldness in the future.

Germany and Japan had had an understanding since November 1936, in which Italy joined one year later. They declared they were making common cause against Communism, and thus gave the elements of appeasement in the Western democracies a ready-made reason for justifying themselves. Russia was virtually an exile from European diplomacy during these years, in sharp contrast to her traditional role of leader of the Slavic peoples. She was ignored at Munich, and she kept a close silence. The full price of this folly had

yet to be revealed, desperate last-minute efforts in the summer of 1939 to persuade her to enter a "Stop Hitler" partnership led by Britain resulted in failure.²

The Rome-Berlin-Tokyo Axis, as the three Fascist powers were now coming to be called, at first advertised itself as Anti-Communist. Actually it was a loose combination of powers which had a common interest in conquest. Japan hoped to make herself the mistress of Greater East Asia, an ambition which she lost no time in proclaiming once the Western Powers had made their fatal surrender at Munich.³ Italy dreamed of a new Roman Empire in the Mediterranean, and she too became bolder after Munich. Germany expected to be lord of them all at the end, but found it very convenient to utilize the services of her fellow thieves until she had completed the downfall of Britain and France in the West. The collective aim of the Axis was to bring about a complete revolution in world power, to terrorize or to force the British and the French to give up the control of the vital trade routes on the high seas, and ultimately to isolate the United States and force it back to the limits of its own continental domain. To advance this ambition, the Axis, and especially the Germans, displayed an astounding ingenuity in exploiting feelings of jealousy and distrust among the peoples of the Western Powers toward one another; in capitalizing the discontent to be found in every Western country during the years of a harrowing economic depression; in playing upon the pathetic longing for peace and the spirit of disillusionment that proved the masters of popular feeling in Britain, France, and the United States, and in losing no opportunity to impress the world with German unity and military might.

A catalogue of Nazi activities to this end would exceed the scope of this volume. We have mentioned the Western fear of Communism, we might also expand upon the latent mistrust of the British Empire prevalent among certain elements in the United States, especially in the Middle West, and the easy disposition to accept the Fascist argument that the "have-not nations" ought to have a new

² There appear to have been two factors which influenced the Western Powers to ignore Russia: (1) the dread of Communism, which was strong in capitalistic countries, especially during the years of economic depression; (2) the memory that it had been the quarrel between Slav and Teuton over mastery of the Balkans that had precipitated the war in 1914. The underlying meaning of the appeasement policy was the granting to Germany of a free hand in the East. Munich was the climax, and its sequel showed the perils to which Britain and France had exposed themselves. The British then sharply reversed themselves and tardily set to work to organize a "Stop Hitler" coalition.

³ The Japanese seized Canton in October 1938, thereby putting British and American interests in China virtually at their mercy.

deal Where this argument struck home in the United States it invariably implied sacrifices by Britain and France, the cession of colonies for example Rarely if ever did it take into consideration the possible weakening of the American position in the Western Hemisphere Only belatedly did the American public awaken to the fact that the Axis was intriguing for advantage in South America.

Munich flashed a definite warning It was that Great Britain had lost control, that the peace of Europe henceforth lay in Hitler's hands. Having realized their mistake, the British set doggedly to work to repair the disaster They waited till Hitler closed in on the remainder of Czechoslovakia, a feat easily accomplished in March 1939. With the Czechs in his pocket, the German dictator at once turned his fury on the Poles This time the British countered by handing Poland a blank check: she could resist the Germans on any point she chose and get British support.

The crucial question, however, was the attitude of Russia The British sent an eleventh-hour delegation to conciliate the Soviet dictator It was too late. For reasons of his own Stalin threw in his lot with the Nazis. On August 23, 1939, the Nazi Foreign Minister, von Ribbentrop, performed the crowning act of German diplomacy; he signed a virtual partnership with Soviet Russia, which led to the partition of Poland. Hitler had succeeded in repeating the achievement of Napoleon in 1807; a Russo-German pact meant that Europe was at the mercy of these two powers and Hitler was free to ignore the British and French in the West. Britain and France were left with the weak Polish alliance as their very dubious asset. So overpowering were the odds against them that Hitler appears to have taken another Munich surrender as a foregone conclusion. Instead the Allies stood by their agreement: the Germans attacked Poland on the first of September, and after a vain gesture at persuading them to withdraw their troops the British and the French launched into war.

Through this period of increasing danger the American government had remained no passive spectator. From the reports of its agents in Europe it pieced together an accurate blueprint of Axis plans, and it did its best to shape American policy to thwart them. One of the first reports came from George S. Messersmith, the consul-general in Berlin, in June 1933 The United States, he wrote, must be exceedingly careful in its dealings with Germany as long as the existing [Nazi] government was in power, as that Government had no spokesman who could readily be depended upon and those who held the

highest positions were "capable of actions which really outlaw them from ordinary intercourse" He reported that some of the men who were running the German Government were "psychopathic cases"; that others were in a state of exaltation and in a frame of mind that knew no reason . . . that the leaders of Germany had no desire for peace unless it was a peace in complete compliance with German ambitions; that Hitler and his associates really wanted peace for the moment, but only to have a chance to prepare for the use of force if it were found essential.⁴

Mr Messersmith's opinion was fully shared by other American observers in Germany. Douglas Miller, the commercial attaché, declared

The real emotional drive behind the Nazi program was not so much love of their own country as dislike of other countries. The Nazis would never be content in merely promoting the welfare of the German people; they desired to be feared and envied by foreigners and "to wipe out the memory of 1918 by inflicting humiliations in particular upon the French, the Poles, the Czechs and anybody else they can get their hands on."

From the military attaché in Berlin in May 1934 came a report that foreshadowed the German-Japanese alliance:

Evidence was accumulating which tended "to show the existence of unusually close and friendly relations between Germany and Japan even to the extent of a possible secret alliance." This report stated further that these friendly relations between the two countries were dependent entirely upon self-interest; that the Germans usually expressed themselves to the effect that "we are encouraging . . . relations with Japan because it is to our advantage to do so but we must never forget that we are white people and they are not"

A few months later a dispatch arrived from Ambassador Grew in Tokyo discussing similar symptoms among the Japanese. He said

The aim of certain elements in the Army and Navy, the patriotic societies, and the intense nationalists throughout the country was "to obtain trade control and eventually predominant political influence in China, the Philippines, the Straits Settlements, Siam and the Dutch East Indies, the Maritime Provinces and Vladivostok, one step at a time, as in Korea and Manchuria, pausing intermittently to consolidate and then continuing as soon as the intervening obstacles can be overcome by diplomacy or force"

⁴ This and the succeeding extracts are from the volume issued by the Department of State in January 1943 entitled *Peace and War—United States Foreign Policy, 1931-1941*. This volume is "an introduction to a collection of documents" concerning American policies in foreign relations during the period, and was reprinted in full in the *New York Times*, January 6, 1943.

And, commencing in September 1934, reports flowed in from Ambassador Long in Rome outlining the shape of things to come according to the Italians:

The entire population, both military and civilian, was in complete accord with Mussolini's policies; that the press in every issue gave expression of the national determination to proceed to war and not to tolerate interference from any source. There was every indication of a carefully prepared, well-calculated, "hard, cold and cruel" prosecution of pre-conceived plans by the use of an army and navy which were almost fanatic in their idolatry of and devotion to one man and which were worked up to an editorial pitch unique in modern times. Italy must either be defeated "now" and prevented from realizing its ambitions in East Africa, "or trouble will continue on through for a generation as an additional irritation to European politics and an additional menace to world peace"

Faced with these ominous reports, the administration in Washington was long convinced that the United States should throw its weight into the scale against the aggressors. It especially wanted legislation from Congress that would enable the President to co-operate with other nations in a general arms embargo. Such a measure would help restore the United States to the position of leadership desired in 1919, 1928, and 1931. Secretary Hull promised the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that the power contemplated in a bill before them would be used with the utmost caution and that effective guaranties of co-operation would be required from other governments so as to avoid leaving the United States in an exposed position. The Committee, however, stultified the whole measure by introducing an amendment requiring that any embargo be applied to all belligerents alike. The amendment was exactly contrary to the most rudimentary principles of collective security, and the administration had no choice but to drop its attempt.

Both Roosevelt and Hull then turned their attention to arousing the public. The President declared that 90 per cent of the world's population was content with existing boundaries, that only the other 10 per cent (the actual ratio of the German-Italian-Japanese populations to the total) were being diverted by political leaders to demand expansion at the expense of their neighbors. A little more than a year later Mr. Hull attacked the fallacies of "splendid isolation." Our policies, he affirmed, must of necessity be those of a great power; we could not, even if we would, "fail profoundly to affect international relations." There were four pillars of a sound peace structure, he declared. (1) the renunciation of war as an instrument of national

policy, (2) a promise of nonaggression; (3) consultation in the event of a threat to peace, and (4) noninterference on our part with measures of constraint brought against a deliberate violator of peace. It was the unreadiness of the United States to accept the third and fourth of these points that fettered our progress toward an organized peace. To continue with efforts to apply an out-moded system of neutrality, which set up legalistic rules treating both sides in a war impartially, was simply a demonstration of the fatal contradiction which had existed in American foreign policy since the preceding war. As an instrument of national policy, neutrality had really been forsaken by the United States in the previous war. It had been inadequate then because to have followed it would have been to play directly into the hands of Germany. It was tenfold more inadequate now, when three robber nations were scheming to shake the world to its foundations.

Most striking of all was a speech by the President of the United States at Chicago, on October 5, 1937. Mr. Roosevelt dwelt on the "solidarity and interdependence" of the modern world and the "epidemic of world lawlessness" that was spreading; he repeated the charge of 1933 that 10 per cent of the world's population was jeopardizing the peace and security of the other 90 per cent; and he proposed "quarantining" the lawbreakers. The speech was a challenge to the deadening influence of isolationism; but while it aroused plenty of discussion it accomplished little toward breaking the hold of isolationism upon the country's foreign policy.

A combination of pacificism, isolationism, and party politics in fact came close to prostituting the foreign policy of the United States during the ensuing three months. A Representative Ludlow from Indiana had proposed a constitutional amendment to transfer the power to declare war from the hands of Congress to the people direct. The original draft was so extreme as to prohibit action by the armed forces of the United States, prior to the taking of a popular plebiscite, unless the *continental* domain of the United States was actually invaded. The proposal of course belonged to the lunatic type of legislation; it ignored the most elementary principles of defense and repudiated the Monroe Doctrine. According to it, an enemy might occupy the St. Lawrence Valley, Vancouver Island in the northwest, or the peninsula of Lower California, while the American people were still debating what to do. There was little risk of such a measure actually getting through Congress, not to mention the legislatures of three-fourths of the states. It had been buried in the files of a House Committee for the previous three years. Now,

however, it enjoyed a sudden, if brief popularity. Isolationists demanded that the proposed amendment be discharged by the committee so that it could be debated on the floor of the House—they were seeking a test of the administration's policies. The resulting publicity advertised the existing bitterness and suspicion toward the Executive and the dangerous division in public opinion. It was a field day for persons like Hamilton Fish of New York, ever ready to exploit the popular confusion and get themselves into the limelight. The motion to discharge the amendment from the committee was beaten, but it took administration pressure to do it, and the House divided 209 to 188, only eleven votes constituting the margin on this gravely important question.

It is not easy to analyze the extraordinary emotions that swayed American public opinion and almost destroyed Executive leadership in foreign affairs during the 1930's. Between 1931, when Stimson got temporary support for his policies against Japan, and March 1941, when the Roosevelt administration won its great victory through the passage of the Lend-Lease Act, American foreign policy was the creature of uncertainty. There was only one point at which the Executive had a reasonably clear field; that was in the popularity of its "Good Neighbor Policy" toward the Latin-American republics. Here sentiment, rooted in the traditions of Pan Americanism, and an appetite for new markets to replace the ones lost in Europe, allowed the President a free hand. Actually considerations of high policy influenced the administration in its program of hemispheric solidarity: it was determined to strengthen its Latin-American fences in the face of rising dangers from abroad. But the public did not fully appreciate this until after war had broken out in Europe; much less was there any correlation between the practical problems of hemispheric defense and the aggressive use of sea power with which to stand off a prospective invader. History had no lessons to furnish for this purpose.

Furthermore, it would be difficult to find in American national history a combination of circumstances at home and abroad similar to those of the decade in question. The disastrous economic depression at home and the all but complete breakdown in the normal conditions of international commerce and finance were the central facts at the time Franklin D. Roosevelt came to power. Factional hatreds were strong within the country, and bitter opposition to the recovery program of the New Deal sometimes carried over into the field of foreign policy. On the other hand, it must be remembered that American irresolution was fully matched by the weak, opportunistic

policies of Britain and France. There was no strong leadership anywhere in the democratic countries. The great majority of the people hated the dictators, but disbelief and fear of war were stronger passions. The previous war was currently viewed as a ghastly failure. What hope for better results in a second struggle?

Nevertheless, the public was full of foreboding; American opinion seems to have reached the conclusion that war in Europe was inevitable long before the people of Britain and France realized it. Shortly after Munich there was a curious exhibition of mass terror. A radio play broadcast from New York depicted realistically an imaginary invasion of the United States from Mars. The play was a revival of H. G. Wells's phantasy, *The War of the Worlds*, and the "invasion" was described as taking place in New Jersey. The results were as incredible as the play itself. People in the vicinity who heard the broadcast fled from their homes, theater audiences in New York City went into a panic, and persons as far away as San Francisco made frantic inquiries about the "attack." It was an opportunity for ridicule of which Hitler in due time made good use.

The dominant sentiment in the United States was a militant type of isolationism which crystallized about the time that Hitler invaded the Rhineland. Its battle cry was the slogan "Keep out of war!" and Congress, not the President, was entrusted with the task. A group of younger Senators, mostly representing the Middle West, seized the initiative, led by Gerald P. Nye of North Dakota, they got the Senate to appoint a Munitions Investigating Committee in 1934. The move was immensely popular; it was thoroughly in line with the existing bitterness toward bankers and industrialists, who were considered responsible for the depression. The Munitions Committee acted in accordance with certain preconceptions, and it accumulated a mass of circumstantial evidence to prove that bankers and munitions makers had driven the United States into war in 1917. It passed lightly over the basic factors of American participation, and pictured the people as victims of British propaganda and profit-seeking financiers and industrialists. Its report was a perfect reflection of the cynicism and unbelief characteristic of the depression years, and it blamed everybody but the Germans for the war. Even the German submarine campaign came in for a word of approval.⁸

The Munitions Committee overdid itself and aroused considerable criticism. Nevertheless, the pattern of 1917 became a fixture in

⁸ As a dispassionate historical analysis of the situation in 1914-17 and the reasons for American participation, the Committee's report was practically worthless. Compare chapter 21 above.

the American mind. There was an all but unanimous belief in the "war-mongering" influence of private business. The real purpose of the war in 1917 was forgotten—the need for breaking Germany's chances of victory—and the disappointments and futility of that struggle alone were remembered. The feeling was especially intense in the Middle West, one of the sections of the country most hard-hit during the depression; furthermore, this section, it will be recalled, had never accepted wholeheartedly the fear of German domination that ruled the East. The traditions of the Middle West were isolationist and anti-British; in so far as the large German communities were concerned, they were also pro-German. But the Middle West also harbored a hatred of Eastern financiers and industrialists, whom it accused of having dragged the country into war in 1917. If these men could be kept by law from repeating in the next war what they had done in the last, the country would be saved from involvement.

The Neutrality Act of 1935 was the fruit of this mood. Fresh aggressions by the dictators in 1936 and 1937 brought new legislation, but the original determination to control American business remained unchanged. The principal features of these acts were as follows: (1) an automatic embargo on the export of arms and munitions to nations at war, (2) a like embargo on the extension of private loans to belligerents, (3) a prohibition against American ships entering the ports of belligerents or even navigating sections of the high seas which the President should define as war zones, (4) a prohibition against American citizens taking passage on ships of belligerents. Even the Nye committee quailed at the prospect of prohibiting *all* trade with belligerents, for food and raw materials were too important in the American economy to suffer a sudden embargo. Nevertheless, through a "cash and carry" plan, it was thought that the United States would escape the consequences of continuing the general trade. If the belligerents bought the goods before leaving American shores, and carried them across the Atlantic at their own risk, there would be neither financial loss to the United States nor food for controversy with a belligerent. The theory of the law was that involvement in European wars had arisen in the past from violations of American neutral rights and that the same pattern would reappear in the next war. Therefore the isolationists who followed Nye would give up neutral rights. This was too much for the old-fashioned isolationists, like Hiram Johnson, and at their instance a provision was inserted to the effect that the United States gave up none of its rights on the high seas. It was a case of having one's cake and eating it too.

The weakness of this legislation lay in the fact that it was based on a fallacy. The arms trade was not the cause of the German submarine campaign in the First World War, and the Germans did not wait until the arms embargo was repealed in 1939 before commencing submarine operations in the next, neither were the private loans to the Allies in 1914-16 a cause of American entry in 1917. Even the theory that neutral rights were the root cause, either then or in 1812, was open to serious doubt. But the crowning fallacy of the neutrality laws lay in the supposition that there was no connection between the security of the United States and the balance of power in Europe. It took the catastrophe in France in 1940 to stultify this theory.

The isolationists labored under the illusion that they could use the law-making power to project a policy that would fit a certain imaginary pattern of the future. What they succeeded in doing was to add to the general uncertainty and bewilderment and to sap the influence of the United States abroad. The arms-embargo section of the Neutrality Law was particularly vicious, a fact which became evident after Munich. Germany then was not only far ahead in the armaments race, she had potential supremacy in the air, and she held the Continent's richest industrial storehouse in her grasp. Britain and France were at a hopeless disadvantage. Germany's reputation for sudden, treacherous attack was firmly established, and Hitler's ambitions were excited by his great triumph of September. The statutory provision for an arms embargo by the United States was a standing invitation to him to commit further outrages. It was neutrality in reverse inasmuch as it practically insured in advance a British and French defeat.

President Roosevelt correctly gauged the danger after Munich. It was then that he successfully instituted a forward foreign policy. In April 1939, when Hitler had given further proof of his depravity by liquidating the Czech Republic, the President formally proposed the repeal of the arms embargo. Party politics, pacifism, isolationist stupidity, and the covert desire of several of the leading isolationists to see Germany become the master of Europe stood in his way, however.⁶ The Republicans as a body refused to be budged. Senator Borah, with magnificent self-assurance, declared in July that his own

⁶ Senator Burton K. Wheeler of Montana, one of the President's bitterest enemies and later a leading firebrand in the notorious America First Committee, privately expressed his approval of Germany's "right" to be dictator of all Europe (*Ambassador Dodd's Diary*, edited by William E. Dodd, Jr., and Martha Dodd, New York, 1941, p. 342). The pattern of thought developed by some of the most vocal isolationists is unmistakable.

private information was better than the State Department's and that there would be no war in 1939. Knowing the real situation, the President used his best efforts to persuade Congress to prolong its session into the summer for the express purpose of repealing the arms embargo. It was understood that a majority of the Republicans would vote for repeal, but only if a war actually broke out. Mr. Roosevelt stated to them his conviction that further delay on the part of Congress would hasten Hitler's decision to attack. The President, to be sure, only voiced an opinion. But the sequence of events points to its soundness. German strategy was (and is) based on the sudden blow. Informed by his agents, no doubt, of the state of American opinion and the disposition to temporize, Hitler may well have determined to wait no longer. Once he had neutralized Russia, he had the cards stacked in his favor.

Meanwhile there were several weak spots in the isolationist fort which the administration had succeeded in breaching. Few of the isolationists cared to cross swords on the question of recognizing the German, Italian, and Japanese despoilment of other countries. Mussolini and the Mikado continued to be given the cold shoulder so far as their foreign conquests were concerned. When Hitler marched into Austria, ostensibly with Austrian consent, the American government could do naught but close its Vienna legation. But when the Nazis violated the body of Czechoslovakia, the case was different. The Czech minister in Washington defied the German order to turn over his legation, and he was given protection and continued recognition as the representative of an independent state. The Nazis got the same kind of reception over their persecution of the Jews. One of the worst horrors in the history of the regime occurred in November 1938, about six weeks after Munich; it was a pogrom of unexampled severity, and it brought expressions of indignation and loathing from all over the United States. The President himself declared he "could scarcely believe that such things could occur in a twentieth century civilization." The criticism struck home: the German chargé in Washington demanded an apology for the language used by the fiery Secretary of the Interior, Harold Ickes; but the State Department not only refused to receive the protest but made counter-complaints against the violent anti-American language of Nazi officials. The American Ambassador was called home to report, and from that time forward the relations of the United States and Germany continued in a state of suspended hostility. The moral sanction, anticipated by the Kellogg Pact, was fully at work; and so completely did the acts of the administration in this respect square with

the opinions of the American public that it took a bold person to utter a criticism of the government's policy

Completely at variance with the policy laid down by the Neutrality Acts was the program of naval expansion, which the termination of the naval treaties in 1936 had greatly accelerated. Obviously the United States was building chiefly against Japan. Obviously, too, American naval strategy required action parallel with the British. This became marked in the western Pacific by 1938, after the Japanese attack on China. Munich made the administration fearful for British security in the Atlantic, consequently in December it announced its determination to re-establish a permanent Atlantic squadron, and early in 1939 the entire Pacific fleet was temporarily transferred to the Atlantic for maneuvers. In spite of isolationist efforts to bait the administration with charges of a British alliance, Congress fully supported the program. Indeed a declaration of basic naval principles drawn up by Chairman Vinson of the House Naval Affairs Committee to accompany the Naval Bill of March 1938 gave the direct lie to the theory of inaction. The Navy, declared the bill,

should be of sufficient strength to guarantee the national security not for aggression but to afford protection to the coast line "in both oceans at one and the same time"; to protect outlying possessions and "our commerce and citizens abroad", to insure "our national integrity", and to support "our national policies."

2 An adequate naval defense requires not only the protection of outlying territories, "but also a defense that will keep any potential enemy many hundreds of miles away from our continental limits"*

Moreover, there were four other ways in which the United States served notice that it did not intend to be outdistanced by the dictators. (1) In August 1938 Mr. Roosevelt publicly associated his country with the defense of Canada. Less than two years later this declaration developed into a definite alliance. (2) In November 1938 reciprocal trade treaties were signed with Great Britain and Canada. A similar treaty had already been completed with Czechoslovakia. When coupled with the score of less important commercial treaties the administration had already negotiated, this treaty system covered the greater portion of the world's trade and confronted the Axis with an imposing economic front. (3) At Lima in December 1938 the American government emerged with a generalized promise of mutual consultation from its Latin-American neighbors. And (4) in April 1939 it put the direct question to Hitler and Mussolini whether they

* Quoted from *The United States in World Affairs, 1938*, p. 128

would promise not to attack any of the independent states of Europe and the Near East for a period of ten years. In exchange for such a pledge the United States would sponsor an international conference at which the dictator countries would have a chance to present their grievances and take part in the abatement of the world's ills. The question of course was purely rhetorical; the appetites of these countries were hardly capable of adjustment to the conference method; and Hitler resorted in reply to the cheap trick of publicly quizzing his weak neighbors on whether or not they were afraid of him.

Undoubtedly these gestures on the part of the United States encouraged the British and French to make a stand against Germany. Completely isolated in August 1939, their declaration of war was an act either of supreme folly or of sublime faith, depending on one's point of view. The United States was their only possible source of large-scale support, and the Neutrality Law appeared designed deliberately to prevent such an outcome. Only the mobilized might of American industry was capable of redressing the balance against the tremendous aggregation of military power and economic wealth that Adolf Hitler had at his command. Moreover, not only were Russian resources available to Hitler, but Russia was a back door through which Germany might receive supplies from the United States. Never was a solemn act of Congress more ironical in its operation and more contrary to the nation's historic policies and elementary needs than the Neutrality Act. In fact it provided something not far short of partnership with the dictators.

The movement to repeal the arms-embargo section was renewed immediately after the opening of the European war. Mr. Roosevelt summoned a special session of Congress for the purpose. Fifty per cent of the people, as measured by the Gallup poll, showed they had a healthy appreciation of the importance of the Anglo-French cause. If, they agreed, it appeared that Britain and France would suffer defeat within a few months, then the United States should declare war and send troops. On the other hand, the great majority, ignoring the disadvantages of the Anglo-French positions, were content to believe blindly in an Allied victory. With this sentiment as a background Mr. Roosevelt was able to secure from Congress a repeal of the arms embargo. The majorities in both houses were more than two to one. But the isolationists still possessed enormous braking power. They had two months in which to repeat the stereotyped opinions which they had vented many times before. Moreover the new measure retained the other features of control and provided for the proclamation of combat areas where American ships might not

operate. To all appearances it was a new declaration of faith in isolationism.

Nevertheless, the lifting of the arms embargo was some compensation for the time being. The British and French had accumulated several billion dollars in American investments prior to the coming of the war. They now mobilized these resources and under the cash-and-carry provisions of the act purchased what they needed from the American market. They even furnished the capital with which to build and expand the factories of American aircraft companies. For reasons best known to themselves the Germans did not institute an aggressive war in the West during the fall or winter of 1939. Except for some ship sinkings and the presence of massed troops along the French border, the scene in Western Europe was hardly different during the first six months of war from what it had been previously. There was a bloody side-show going on in Finland from January to March 1940, with Russia the aggressor. Praise and sympathy were lavished upon the Finns by the American people, but no move was made to put arms in their hands against the Russians. A material interest in the independence of Finland was lacking. It was otherwise when the integrity of Britain and France was placed in jeopardy.

Without the slightest warning the whole character of the war in Europe changed in April 1940. Like a swarm of locusts the Nazis descended upon Denmark and Norway. Having already demilitarized themselves, the Danes surrendered without a blow; their government was allowed to remain in office, but henceforth it became the merest echo of Berlin. The Norwegians put up a desperate resistance, but neither their own efforts nor those of the British who came to their aid availed. Norway was simply overwhelmed, its leading ports were occupied simultaneously as far north as Narvik, its inland communications were smashed by Nazi bombs, its government was forced to flee, and an infamous puppet ruler, Vidkun Quisling, was set up in its place. Norway was the first demonstration of what treachery from within, when combined with perfect planning from without, could accomplish in the collapse of a whole nation.

One month later the Germans repeated the feat in Holland, Belgium, and Luxembourg. Costly preparations made by the Dutch and Belgians for their own defense counted for naught. The Germans had planned for a wholly new type of warfare, mechanized columns, paratroops wearing the Dutch and Belgian uniforms, the merciless destruction of cities from the air, and the successful advance plotting

with traitors from within who had sold themselves to the Nazi idea paralyzed the people of the invaded countries. But the greatest shock of all was yet to come. The Allies had entered the war in the general belief that they could win by waiting: economic strangulation would prove the successful weapon, as it had in 1918. They did not intend to invade Germany, and they did not fear invasion of themselves. The great Maginot line would take care of that.

Never was there a more futile belief. The Nazis swept around the Maginot line from Belgium; having made no preparations to meet the new strategy, the French generals found their armies, theoretically the best-trained in Europe, cowed and bewildered before the German onrush. More than three hundred thousand British were cut off from their allies and crowded into a small place along the French-Belgian coast. From this perilous position they were miraculously rescued during the week of May 27 through the genius of the Royal Navy operating with the assistance of hundreds of small craft manned by volunteers from England. The British sacrificed practically all of their arms and equipment, however, and England itself was unprepared to resist invasion. It was at this point that the Germans had to make a choice. Either they could concentrate all their might in an effort to overwhelm the British, in which case they would leave the French on their flank; or they could turn inland toward Paris. They chose the latter course. France was subdued and forced to sign an armistice on June 2, but England was still safe and preparing with feverish haste for the invasion that she was sure would soon be attempted.

It would be hard to imagine a worse predicament for the British than that in which they found themselves in June 1940. Not even in the darkest days of the previous World War had there been a possibility of invasion, the enemy had never wrested control of the Channel ports. Now, however, he was master of the whole European coast from Spain to the Arctic Circle. More than a hundred years before Napoleon had held the same geographical advantages. The Germans held all of these, and in addition they had unquestioned superiority in the air. From a score of French, Belgian, Dutch, and Norwegian ports they could swarm in upon the English. Once they could defeat British air power over its own territory, the Royal Navy could be neutralized and the island itself made a direct prey to an invading force.

The possibility, which many informed persons for awhile thought a probability, of the downfall of Great Britain invoked questions for the United States which had never been asked in the na-

tion's history. Fundamentally there was just one question. How would the elimination of Great Britain as a world power affect American security? The issue was so sudden, its implications suggested so many ramifications, that it was difficult to formulate a comprehensive answer.

One reply, of course, was that there was no connection—or at least there need not be—between Britain's integrity and the safety of the United States. Such a response had to assume either (a) that relations with Germany and her Axis partners would become as peaceful as they had been with Great Britain or (b) that the United States could trust exclusively to its own armed might in case of attack by the Axis. Most of those who wished to find this answer used a train of logic that was a blend of these two assumptions. They accepted Hitler's argument that he had no designs on the Western Hemisphere; they held that commerce with Europe could be resumed once the war was over, even though Germany dominated the Continent, and they rejected the notion that the United States was beholden for its safety to British sea power. In short, they concluded, there was no real reason why Germany should not be just as good a friend of the United States as Great Britain.

A compound of these opinions and others of a similar character was set forth repeatedly by the isolationists between the fall of France and the Japanese blow at Pearl Harbor. Among the most insistent of the isolationists were the former aviator, Charles A. Lindbergh, Senator Burton K. Wheeler of Montana, Senator Gerald P. Nye of North Dakota, and Representative Hamilton Fish of New York. The organization which backed them took the characteristic name of the America First Committee. This committee proceeded to mobilize the familiar tools of publicity in a fight to "keep the country out of war" and defeat the positive measures advocated by the Roosevelt administration. It built up a considerable following, especially in the Middle West, during the winter of 1940-41 and it succeeded in delaying, though not defeating, such important measures as the Lend-Lease Act and the Military Service Act of 1941. The latter passed the House of Representatives in August by only a single vote. Its failure would have meant the discharge from the army of selectees who had had their year's training and the necessity for military authorities virtually to start all over again in training a national army.

The America First Committee was the spearhead of a virulent isolationism which step by step fought to keep the United States neutral. It thought consistently in terms of the conclusions of the

Senate Munitions Committee of 1934 and the Neutrality Laws of that decade. It enjoyed the parallel activity of many pacifist groups, and its chief asset was the widespread fear among the people of getting into the war. Nevertheless, there was now far less hesitation, as we shall see, and a much sharper evaluation of the issues, than in the period 1914-17. The isolationists had their largest following in the Middle West, the majority of whose votes in Congress were mustered against such key measures as the act repealing the arms embargo in October 1939 and the Lend-Lease Bill in March 1941. The section showed some distaste for the draft, for the lengthening of the term of compulsory service beyond the one year originally required, and for the giving of a free hand to the War Department in ordering troops to duty outside of the Western Hemisphere. In other sections of the country isolationism was pronouncedly weak. Party politics had considerable influence; the Republicans were in the majority in the Middle West, and the Republican membership in Congress consistently opposed the Administration's wishes.

The great majority of the people, however, as measured repeatedly by the Gallup polls, were committed to steps in aid of Britain. In fact these polls showed that public opinion in this respect was consistently ahead of Congress. Most efficient in publicizing measures desired by the government was the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies. This was a private organization whose leaders had through the years kept the faith with Wilsonian principles of collective security. The Committee was a direct outgrowth of the League of Nations Association, which with the help of the Carnegie Endowment had managed to weather the storm of isolationism that had swept over the country during the 1930's. The Nazi invasion of France and the resulting alarm in the United States afforded striking testimony to the soundness of the Association's past teachings. Under the chairmanship of the famous Kansas editor, William Allen White, the new organization carried on an energetic publicity campaign throughout the entire nation. It reached the smallest communities through local chapters, which in less than a year swelled to more than eight hundred in number. Reflecting the sectional differences in the country, these were most numerous in the Northeast, in the South, and on the Pacific Coast, relatively weak in the Middle Western states, the growing number of the Committee's chapters in that area, however, showed that isolationism was even there declining.

The directors of the Committee to Defend America were in close touch with the authorities in Washington, and it proved an extremely

effective agency in cultivating public sentiment in advance for measures which the administration desired. Indeed the Committee scored practically one hundred per cent in the relation between the measures for which it fought and those which were later put into effect. A striking illustration was the destroyer deal of September 1940: The Committee began the campaign for this proceeding in July; it got advance information from the Administration of the number of destroyers the latter expected to transfer to the British, and the public was familiarized with the facts and the necessity well in advance of the event. The Committee had the endorsement of some of the best-known figures in American public life, General Pershing, Admiral Yarnell, Admiral Stirling, President Conant of Harvard, and scores of prominent persons representing a cross section of society supported it heartily. In general, it followed the opportunistic line of advocating aid "short of war." "War" the popular mind interpreted to mean the sending of an expeditionary force, as in 1917. It was shown beyond a doubt that the people did not care what they did to Germany, they wanted the Nazis beaten; and the popular conscience was not troubled by oft-heard warnings from the isolationist camp that the destroyer deal and other measures of assistance really constituted "acts of war." So they undoubtedly did in the eyes of formal international law. But only the most punctilious legalists clung to the fiction that the United States was a neutral nation. There was neither a political nor an ethical basis for neutrality in the great conflagration that was menacing every principle dear to American civilization. The American public was prepared to do anything short of sending its boys to fight. At length Pearl Harbor swept even this reservation into oblivion.

The flaws in the isolationists' argument were twofold: they ignored the plain record of Hitler's past lies and aggressions, and they were unmindful of the sound facts of American history. The first flaw was apparent to all but the small pro-German and pro-Fascist minority and to those who, for one reason or another, were blinded by hatred for Great Britain. So many shades of isolationism existed as virtually to defy classification. For the most part the movement attracted popularity through its success in stimulating anti-British feeling. The isolationists spent most of their energies in finding fault with the British; it was a bold person indeed who dared to utter sympathy for the German cause. The leaders of the America First Committee were themselves spared the implication of being pro-Nazi, nevertheless, a number of disquieting facts came to light which put their influence on the wane. The *New York*

Herald-Tribune uncovered the fact that the Committee had received important financial contributions from Bundist organizations and other known pro-Nazi sources. It also became public knowledge that Messrs. Wheeler, Nye, and Fish had lent their franking privileges to the Committee for the extension of its propaganda through the mails. Wheeler in particular was identified with a very dubious questionnaire circulated among the service men who had formerly been his constituents; the questionnaire was so worded as to encourage discontent, even disaffection, in the various Army camps. Add to these disclosures the continual outpouring of intemperate assertions regarding questions of policy and military strategy, oftentimes directly contrary to the known judgments of the responsible administrative and military officers of the country, and it can be seen that the isolationists were fighting a losing battle for public favor. Their chief mouthpiece, Charles Lindbergh, made himself ridiculous by pitting his opinions on political and military matters directly against the expressed views of the President and leading members of the government.

As said before, the United States was confronted with a situation in 1940 which was absolutely without parallel. Comparatively speaking, there had been no really vital issue affecting American security since the early days of the Republic.* In those years the country had held the position of a buffer, from which it succeeded in freeing itself by a series of cautious steps between 1783 and 1803. In some measure the strife of the European powers among themselves had made a succession of bloodless victories possible for the United States in this regard. Since that time the United States had made a number of moves to strengthen the security of both its territorial domain at home and its interests abroad. Few of these moves had lacked an aggressive spirit; many of them had been identified with sweeping claims respecting the American position in the Western Hemisphere and the right to a share in the trade of the Orient. In short, the United States had throughout its history held to a liberal, not to say expansive, concept of the requirements of its own security. It is, moreover, true that these requirements had been realized somewhat at the expense of British interests and under the cloak of a sort of partnership in which the United States had gradually achieved senior rank. By 1914 conceptions of the security of the United States were inseparable from its position of dominance in the Western Hemisphere. But, as we have noted elsewhere, this position rested

* Look back over the preceding case studies in this Part for corroboration of this statement. A domestic conflict, the Civil War, was the only exception.

implicitly on British control of the Atlantic. Hitler's professions to the contrary, the Germans had quite different ideas about the future of South America.

The traditional idea of American security was founded on the belief that distance was a permanent protection. Three thousand miles of ocean were the invariable justification for the policy of isolation from Europe. The freedom of action which the United States enjoyed during the nineteenth century fixed this belief as one of the great dogmas of American history. The debacle of 1940 forced a decisive reconsideration of this concept. Distance, of course, had been shrinking for some years, thanks to the speedier means of communication. The airship practically wiped it out. Even while France was being invaded, Mr. Roosevelt made telling use of this fact. A mere recital of flying schedules was enough to overthrow the popular confidence in geography, not even the Middle West would be safe from air raids, once an enemy gained the right positions. The immediate effect of the French collapse was to create a frenzied demand for national defense. Mr. Roosevelt asked for money to build fifty thousand planes. But that was only a start. Congress speedily adopted a program to create a two-ocean navy, one designed to maintain a fleet in the Atlantic equal to that already in the Pacific. It was tacit acknowledgement of the fact that the United States had hitherto trusted to British sea power to safeguard the Atlantic approaches. In other words, there had been a hidden factor in American security which was quickly appreciated once its existence was threatened. But the American people were far from satisfied with sea and air power alone. Before the summer of 1940 was over, the National Guard had been mustered into the regular Army for indefinite service and Congress had passed the Selective Service Act authorizing the conscription for a year's training of men between the ages of twenty-one and thirty-five. It took nearly three months to get the bill through Congress; furthermore, the distrust was keen lest this be the entering wedge for the dispatch of an expeditionary force. It was hard to overcome the thought-pattern of 1917, and the bill contained the proviso that the drafted men could not be used outside of the Western Hemisphere or the possessions of the United States. In spite of these limitations, however, the Selective Service Act was a revolutionary measure—it was the first time a draft of man power had ever been applied in advance of actual involvement in war.

These frenzied efforts to repair the military deficiencies of the country, it must be remembered, were set in motion only after the

French Republic had fallen in pieces. Under the armistice of June 22 the French surrendered two-thirds of their country to the German and Italian enemy. The remnant, known henceforth as Unoccupied France, comprised a portion of the interior south of Paris and a part of the Mediterranean coastline, including the port of Marseille and the naval base at Toulon. Fearing trouble from Italy even before the Germans struck at Holland and Belgium, the Roosevelt administration had used its utmost persuasive powers to keep Mussolini out of the war. The Italian dictator was told that the United States had an important economic stake in the Mediterranean, that it had traditional and historical interests in that sea that could not be ignored, and that if the war were thus extended the United States would redouble its aid to the Allies. Furthermore, an attempt was made to detach Mussolini from his German alliance; if Italy would state her specific desires, he was told, they would be communicated to Great Britain and France, an effort would be made to reach an agreement, and the United States would obtain an assurance from the British and French that they would faithfully execute the agreement at the end of the war. It was an eleventh-hour adventure in appeasement in the hope of keeping the war out of the Mediterranean; but it failed to make an impression. Mussolini had already pleaded with the United States to accept the "new geography" of Europe, and on June 1 he told the President he had decided on war. By this time the Nazis were on the road to Paris, and the Italian jackal, having gambled at least since 1937 on the triumph of Germany, leaped for the few crumbs of French territory while yet there was time. Mr. Roosevelt only voiced a common thought in the United States when he publicly declared on the day Italy attacked that "the hand that held the dagger has struck it in the back of its neighbor."

The conversion of the Mediterranean into a theater of war, with the odds heavily in favor of the Axis, had far-reaching effects on the American position, just as had been feared. Vichy, the new capital of the French state, was in charge of men who displayed increasing tendencies to collaborate with the Germans. The immediate problem was to keep the French fleet, which in the Atlantic was second in size only to the British, from getting into German clutches. With a force of that size under their command, the Nazis might well roam the seas without hindrance. By directly warning the French authorities that if they gave up their navy they would "permanently lose the friendship and good-will" of the United States, Roosevelt extracted a pledge that it would not be surrendered. This

did not end the peril, however. A powerful segment of the French fleet was in North Africa, and its commander, Admiral Darlan, refused to bow to the joint British and American efforts to immobilize it or get it to support the British Navy. In consequence the British fell on it at Oran, Algeria, in July; they sank part of it, but the remaining vessels took flight and escaped. From that time the British and the Vichy French were unofficially at war. A minority of French fighting forces, calling themselves the Free French, rallied in London, however, under the lead of General de Gaulle and remained steadfast to the Allied cause. The French colonial empire likewise split in twain; and as the war continued to spread and the contest for strategic positions between the Axis and their foes became fiercer, the allegiance chosen by the several French colonial governors became of the utmost importance.

The crucial area in this strategy was French West Africa. Through Dakar it was an open bridge to South America, but it was equally well located for submarine operations against shipping in the South Atlantic. So great appeared to be the danger to Dakar that rumors cropped out that the United States would take the precaution of seizing the Azores from Portugal. These islands were the equivalent in the South Atlantic of Greenland and Iceland in the North Atlantic. Portugal now issued a warning that she would resist the occupation of her islands, but nevertheless, after the German threat to Dakar was over, she conceded their use to Great Britain, who in turn shared the islands' facilities with the United States. Meanwhile a close struggle went on behind the scenes at Vichy; France, in the eyes of the United States, was a "captive nation," and President Roosevelt sent one of his most trusted representatives, Admiral Leahy, to try to loosen her chains. Leahy remained for the better part of a year in Vichy, and French Africa was kept free of German control.

The Ambassador withdrew in the spring of 1942, when it became evident that France was falling more and more under the influence of the "collaborationist," Pierre Laval. A few months later a huge American expeditionary force landed in North Africa to take up positions in conjunction with the British and regain the mastery of the Mediterranean. The Germans immediately closed in on Unoccupied France, but they were not prompt enough to prevent the French from destroying their fleet.

Now to return to 1940. The prime problem in American security, as viewed by the government, was how to get enough aid to the

British. Not only must Britain be helped to stand the Germans off, but she must eventually defeat them. In an immortal speech, delivered during the dark hours after Dunkerque, Winston Churchill, the British Prime Minister, breathed defiance. But the task seemed all but hopeless. England had sacrificed the best of her heavy equipment in Flanders, and was feared to be open to direct invasion. The Nazis had only twenty miles of water to cross, and they could get at the country by air from as many points on the Continent as they chose. It was doubted whether the English had sufficient air power to cover the movements of their fleet, and the usefulness of the heavy ships of the Navy in the emergency was doubted. Even though the Nazis failed to make a direct landing, the odds were still heavily in their favor. With the French ports in their grip and with aircraft scouting the seas against British ships, the enemy could wage a devastating submarine campaign.

If Britain fell, the advantages in the entire Atlantic would alter heavily in favor of Germany; and if the Germans obtained control over any considerable portions of the British or French fleets, their superiority over the United States would soon be overwhelming. The latter country would immediately be outranked in the North Atlantic, and the Germans could now make easy prey of Dakar. The United States possessed only a weak force in the Atlantic, if it shifted its fleet to meet the German challenge, its Pacific flank would be dangerously exposed to the Japanese, and there could, of course, be hardly a doubt as to what the latter would do in any event in the region of the Dutch East Indies. The possibilities of a two-ocean attack on the Western Hemisphere indeed stirred the American imagination. Visions of superior enemy fleets on both oceans, built and maintained by slave labor in Europe and Asia, made these fears the more vivid. For the first time the disadvantages of the thousands of miles of undefended coastline of the two continents and the comparative helplessness of the other American nations began to be appraised realistically. It was questioned whether any aggregation of naval strength on the part of the United States could offset these natural handicaps. Then there was the new vulnerability to attack from the air. Flights to the New World by the North Polar route were entirely possible. Many years previously Captain Mahan had pointed out that the genius of British sea power rested fundamentally on the location of the island of Britain athwart the trade routes from western Europe. Now the United States was suddenly required to look upon Britain as a great bastion in the northeast Atlantic, a fortress which must be held at all costs against the Nazi torrent.

Thoroughly aware of the supreme crisis with which it was faced, the government of the United States found the means of effectively reinforcing Great Britain. Over night that country transformed herself into an arsenal; but for the moment she even lacked small arms. By means of trade-in agreements with private manufacturers, in which the latter contracted to make replacements, the American government freed large quantities of unused stocks of rifles, ammunition, machine guns, and so forth. This material had been left from the last war, and no one could say how effective it would prove against modern equipment. That it was considered worth shipping attests the extreme gravity of the crisis.

Far more important was the decision to transfer to the Royal Navy fifty of the one hundred-odd destroyers left over from the First World War. Unlike the trade-in agreements of June, this involved a direct transaction with the British government, the destroyers were destined for convoy duty, and they made up for the naval losses which the enemy had inflicted on the British during the summer. The agreement was effected on September 2, 1940, through an exchange of letters between the Secretary of State and the British Ambassador. As its part of the bargain the British government promised to turn over, on the basis of a ninety-nine-year, rent-free lease, the sites for six naval and air bases in British Guiana and the British West Indian islands. Having sounded public opinion in advance, Mr. Roosevelt confronted Congress with the accomplished fact, and by making the appropriation for the improvement of the said sites that body shortly after set the seal of its approval upon the whole transaction. Isolationists had a right to complain that the deal was a violation of American "neutrality"; it was an outright repudiation of the rules set up in 1871 at the instance of the United States itself respecting the transfer of vessels of war from a neutral to a belligerent. But the President shrewdly put the emphasis on the value of the rights acquired by the United States and the defensive nature of the proceeding, the public was indifferent to legal arguments over neutrality, and in voting for the money with which to develop the bases even the isolationists in Congress showed a practical disregard for consistency.⁹

⁹ Further aspects of the important destroyer-base deal are described in chapter 9 above. The violation of neutrality refers back to the successful American complaint against Great Britain for allowing the escape of the "Alabama" in 1862. A discussion of this may be found in the Introduction to Part III, pp. 692-94.

The destroyer deal was an executive agreement, not a treaty, it therefore did not require approval of the Senate. By a hair-splitting process the Attorney-General reconciled the President's right to dispose of the destroyers with domestic law.

These events took place in the midst of a heated campaign over the re-election of Mr. Roosevelt to a third term in the Presidency. Issues of foreign policy offered a golden opportunity to the President's opponents to throw the country into an uproar, had they so chosen. Nothing of the sort took place. So mild were the criticisms offered by Wendell Willkie, the Republican candidate, that they suggested the possibility of a pre-arrangement between the two men. Willkie censured the *method* of concluding the deal but approved the objective. It was a harmless criticism that caused little embarrassment to either party. After the campaign was over, Mr. Willkie showed by word and deed that he would have behaved in the same manner himself, much to the discomfiture of the isolationist Republicans in Congress he cast aside all restraint and became even more blunt than Roosevelt in demanding energetic steps to assist Great Britain. Henceforth Willkie filled a unique position. still a political opponent of the President, he nevertheless conferred frequently with Roosevelt, made a special trip to England on his own initiative, and on his return announced himself as advocating the establishment of American naval bases in Greenland, Iceland, and even Northern Ireland. The occupation of the first two took place in the spring of 1941. While troops did not actually appear in Northern Ireland until after the declaration of war by Germany upon the United States, the preparation and installation of the necessary facilities for them were begun well in advance. Like the Committee to Defend America, Mr. Willkie more than once acted as a mouthpiece for the administration in priming public opinion for aggressive measures against the Axis.

The election campaign out of the way, a succession of vigorous acts aimed at the Axis was carried out. The list is so extensive as to make an exhaustive itemization here unfeasible. Flying Fortresses were transferred to the British government to aid in the long-range bombing of Germany and Italy, revenue cutters were dispatched to prosecute the war against the submarine under the British flag, the ships of the Danish merchant marine which had been immobilized in American ports were seized and put into service, German and Italian vessels were sequestered, German and Italian consulates were ordered closed and the banking credits of both countries frozen, a blacklist was enforced against Latin-American firms for having done business with the Axis, and convoying by American destroyers part way across the Atlantic was introduced. These were among the less important measures "short of war" taken between November 1940 and the following summer. Meanwhile the Germans were busy trying

to cut the British Empire in two in the Mediterranean; in a spectacular winter campaign they overran Yugoslavia and Greece and got as far as Crete, from which island, however, they showed no ability to attack the main British base at Alexandria. They had, however, succeeded in conjunction with the Italians in making the Mediterranean too dangerous for British shipping; the garrisons in Egypt and the Middle East had to receive their supplies by means of the long haul around Africa. This was a fairly safe route, and when by April 1941 the Italians were forced out of Ethiopia and Somaliland, Mr. Roosevelt used his executive power to declare the Red Sea no longer a war zone. This enabled the United States to begin the building of a "bridge of ships" from its ports on both coasts in aid of the gigantic task of keeping the British forces supplied in the Middle East.

Meanwhile Mr. Roosevelt had realistically outlined the principles of American security, scoffed at the absurdity of a negotiated peace advocated by isolationists and pacifists, and pledged the United States to become the arsenal of democracy. "The experience of the past two years," he declared in a memorable radio address on December 29, 1940, "has proven beyond doubt that no nation can appease the Nazis. No man can tame a tiger into a kitten by stroking it." Five months later he followed this with the proclamation of an unlimited national emergency, he called attention to the dangerous rate of ship sinkings in the Atlantic, more than twice the combined output of British and American yards at that time; and he stressed the supreme importance of keeping the control of the seas out of Axis hands. All of this time the Gallup polls showed that the great majority of the people in the United States related their own individual fortunes to the cause of victory or defeat overseas; if Hitler won, it was agreed, each individual American would feel the effects. The President in his speech of May 27, 1941, only put into words the opinions most Americans had already formed. He declared:

The dictatorships would force the enslaved peoples of their Old World conquests into a system they were then organizing—to build a naval and air force intended to obtain mastery of the Atlantic and the Pacific; an economic stranglehold would be fastened upon the nations of the Western Hemisphere; the American laborer would have to compete with slave labor in the rest of the world, and trade unions would become "historical relics"; the American farmer would face obvious disaster and complete regimentation; the whole fabric of business, manufacturing, mining, and agriculture would be mangled and crippled; a permanent conscription of

our manpower would be necessary, and our resources would be permanently poured into armaments. We did not accept and we would not accept this Nazi "shape of things to come."¹⁰

The keynote of American policy was, as the President declared, to make the United States the arsenal of democracy. We have already reviewed the progress the country was making in its own military preparations. But fully as important was the determination to keep the nations already at war with Hitler supplied with the planes, tanks, ships, and guns they so desperately needed. Down to the time of the President's radio address the British government had fully met these needs out of its own cash resources. To pay for the immense quantities of materials it had bought in the American market it had even sold the two billion dollars worth of American stocks and bonds held by British owners. It had commandeered these securities in exchange for its own bonds and then had sold them back to American buyers, thus accumulating dollars to spend in the United States. In many instances it had even financed the erection of new plants, especially aircraft factories, not to mention additions to older industrial plants in the United States, thereby relieving the private American manufacturer of anxiety over possible postwar losses.

There was a limit to this, of course, and the end was in sight by December 1940. The British Ambassador, Lord Lothian, threw out a warning, and Mr. Roosevelt in his annual message outlined his plan for meeting the situation. He said:

We cannot, and we will not tell them that they must surrender, merely because of present inability to pay for the weapons which we know they must have. I do not recommend that we make them a loan of dollars with which to pay for these weapons—a loan to be repaid in dollars.

I recommend that we make it possible for those nations to continue to obtain war materials in the United States, fitting their orders into our own program. Nearly all their material would, if the time ever came, be useful for our own defense.¹¹

Such was the kernel of the Lend-Lease Bill, which the Administration introduced into Congress in January 1941. The purpose of the bill was "to further promote the defense of the United States." It authorized the President to manufacture in arsenals, factories,

¹⁰ Quoted from the paraphrase of the President's address in *Peace and War—United States Foreign Policy, 1931–1941*, *op. cit.*

¹¹ *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt* (1940 volume, New York, 1941), p. 669.

and shipyards belonging to the United States government, or to buy from any private corporation, "any defense article for the government of any country whose defense the President deems vital to the defense of the United States" The term "defense article" meant any weapon, munition, aircraft or boat, any machinery or tool essential for the manufacture or repair of any other "defense article," or "any other commodity or article for defense" It included food Moreover, the President might "sell, transfer, exchange, lease, or otherwise dispose of, to any such government any defense article" He might repair or recondition any defense article belonging to any such government, and communicate to it any "defense information" (meaning secret plans or specifications regarding weapons or other implements). In return for the help thus granted, "the benefit to the United States may be payment in kind or property, or any other direct or indirect benefit which the President deems satisfactory"¹²

The Lend-Lease Bill presented a challenge to Congress such as that body had not faced since 1861. In that year President Lincoln had used his Executive prerogatives to save the Union; he had actually made war without consulting Congress, and he had made preparations for conducting the conflict on a large scale before he appealed to the national legislature Needless to say, the war thus already begun would have turned into a fiasco unless Congress had come to the President's support Like Lincoln, President Roosevelt had instituted measures which committed the country to a certain objective Those measures, furthermore, were sharply at variance with the spirit, though not the letter, of the only authoritative expression of the Congressional will—the Neutrality Act of 1939 But Mr. Roosevelt was in no better position to make the United States "the arsenal of democracy" than Lincoln had been in 1861 to "save the Union," unless Congress now agreed to underwrite his policies. Obviously the task of insuring a British victory was now too large for the Executive alone to cope with The full weight of American economic resources had to be thrown into the struggle, and Congress alone could authorize that.

With the same brand of self-assurance exhibited by Lincoln, and confidence in the rightness of its position, the Roosevelt administration proceeded on the assumption that it was going to win Congress to its views It told the British government to make its plans in expectation that the Lend-Lease Bill would pass In the Admin-

¹² Text of the Act in Jones and Myers, *Documents on American Foreign Relations*, III (1940-41), 712-15 Italics are inserted

istration's eyes, the crisis was fully comparable to that in 1861 Secretary Hull warned.

The most serious question today for this country is whether the control of the high seas shall pass into the hands of powers bent on a program of unlimited conquest. It is in this light, above all, that we should order our present-day thinking and action with respect to the amount of material assistance which our country is prepared to furnish Great Britain . . .

In the face of the forces of conquest now on the march across the earth, self-defense is and must be the compelling consideration in the determination of wise and prudent national policy. . . .

The great problem of democracy is to organize and to use its strength with sufficient speed and completeness. The proposed legislation is an essential measure for that purpose.¹³

There was an abundance of evidence, as we have seen, that the majority of the people wanted drastic measures, though they were still insistent on "keeping out of war." They were ready to vote billions for defense, but they were not reconciled to doing the fighting themselves. This was really the only issue, paradoxical though it was: whether passing the bill would mean plunging the United States into war or whether it would help the country to stay out. No one, of course, knew the answer. Mr. Wendell Willkie undoubtedly expressed the most enlightened opinion on that score, and offered the sagest advice, in his testimony to the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations shortly after his return from England. He said:

No man can guarantee to you that the policy of aid to Britain will not involve the United States in war. It is my solemn opinion, however, that, providing the aid is effective, it offers the best clear chance for us to keep out of war. Hitler will make war on us, or on our friends and allies in this hemisphere, when, as, and if he chooses. That is his record. But he is far less apt to be aggressive while Britain stands, than if she were to fall.¹⁴

The Lend-Lease Bill was the occasion for a full-dress review of American foreign policy. The Foreign Affairs Committees of both houses held public hearings on the measure, and the bill was debated on the floor of both Senate and House. The isolationists had their chance, and they made the most of it. It was at this time that the America First Committee displayed its greatest activity. The House passed the Bill in less than three weeks, the Senate, the traditional critic of Executive foreign policies and the body where

¹³ Quoted from the Secretary's statement to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs on January 16, 1941, *New York Times*, January 16, 1941.

¹⁴ *New York Times*, February 12, 1941

the isolationists were most vocal, consumed two months. The Bill became law on March 11, 1941, after the House had voted 317 to 71 and the Senate 60 to 31. A few days later both Houses, by an almost unanimous vote, appropriated seven billion dollars with which to carry out the Act; and eighteen months afterward, when the President issued his sixth report on the operations under the Act, the country was sending aid to foreign countries at the rate of eight billion dollars a year.

Lend-Lease led to a practical experiment in collective security on a scale undreamed of by the men of 1918. During the debates on the measure the frame of reference was chiefly aid to the nations of the British Commonwealth, with whose defense the United States was identified through the all-important problem of controlling the high seas. When they saw they were going to be defeated, the opposition tried to limit the benefits of the Bill to the British Commonwealth. The Administration, however, took the broader view that *any* nation fighting the Axis was contributing to the defense of the United States and was therefore entitled to assistance. This view prevailed, and the Act was subsequently administered accordingly. By September 1942, thirty-five foreign countries *in addition* to the British Commonwealth came under its provisions. The Soviet Union came second to the United Kingdom in the amount of assistance, and every European government which the Nazis had driven into exile, except Luxembourg, was a recipient. Besides these, the list included the Fighting French (whose leader, de Gaulle, did not enjoy diplomatic recognition by the United States), Ethiopia, Iraq, Iceland, and all of the twenty republics of Latin America.

More than that, the United States had taken the initiative in concluding Master Lend-Lease Agreements between itself and the United Kingdom, China, and the Soviet Union, respectively; under these agreements the resources, man power, and inventive genius of each and every member of the United Nations were thrown into a common pool. Thus, Mr. Roosevelt reported, British labor, paid by the British government, built bases for the American Army, British factories furnished American troops with "a formidable amount of munitions and supplies," while the peoples of Britain, Australia, and New Zealand, "already on short rations, are freely sharing what they have with our troops." The same sort of reciprocal assistance came from the Fighting French in Equatorial Africa and New Caledonia, while the Lend-Lease system "also has been applied to relations between other United Nations. The United Kingdom, for instance, is so supplying military stores to the Soviet

Union" By this time, too, the distribution of American troops, a million and a half strong, among widely scattered but strategic locations around the world and the system of interchanging forces among nations where they could be used most efficiently (Canadian units in Alaska, for example) gave grim testimony to the completeness with which the United States and its allies could practice the principle of collective security¹⁵

The Master Lend-Lease Agreements were a far cry from the blueprint of international co-operation made at Paris in 1918; but they were a faithful reflection of the principle there laid down that the safety of one nation is the safety of all. Indeed they went beyond that, for they recognized that the problems of Lend-Lease would not expire on the day the fighting should stop. No man could say in 1942 what form the conditions of repayment would take for the gigantic quantities of goods and services being supplied by the United States during the conflict. The Lend-Lease Act, let us remember, spoke of *benefits*, rather than dollars, and left the question of repayment to Executive discretion. Mindful of the fiasco of the war debts and of the ruinous tariffs that grew out of the fierce competition of the 1920's, the parties to the Master Agreements pledged themselves against the recurrence of such evils growing out of Lend-Lease. When the benefits to the United States should be finally determined, each Agreement provided, "the terms and conditions thereof shall be such as not to burden commerce between the two countries, but to promote mutually advantageous economic relations between them and the betterment of world-wide economic relations."¹⁶ Lend-Lease made collective security the practicing creed of the American people in time of war, it remained to be seen whether the lessons thus applied could be carried out as loyally and intelligently in the peace to come later.

The Lend-Lease Act committed the United States to the defeat of Germany. Legal fiction and the absence of fighting, it is true, sustained the illusion that the two countries were still "at peace." They even kept open their respective embassies, each one no doubt perceiving the advantage of retaining a listening post on the soil of the other. The Germans were too busy in Greece and Crete to retaliate in the spring of 1941, and after that Russia absorbed their

¹⁵ The quotations in this paragraph are extracts from the President's "Sixth Report on Lend-Lease Operations," *New York Times*, September 15, 1942. The number of American troops serving overseas was revealed by the President in his annual message, here quoted from the *New York Times*, January 8, 1943.

¹⁶ *Department of State Bulletin*, Vol. VI, No. 140, February 28, 1942.

attention. The United States twice warned that country that she would be attacked, secret reports that this was Hitler's intention reached the State Department even before the enactment of the Lend-Lease Act. Hitler's most gigantic aggression, a battle line a thousand miles long, from the Baltic to the Black Sea, commenced on June 22, 1941.

As for the United States, the American people neither wanted to declare war nor to fight; the time was not ripe to do either, and there was still the possibility that, with the proper material support, Britain could fight the war through to a successful conclusion. Not idealism but cold calculation of self-interest was behind the Administration's policies and the enactment of the Lend-Lease Act. When Russia involuntarily entered the war, she became potentially an ally of the United States and actually so in the following November with the conclusion of a Lend-Lease Agreement. Having resolved to square the account with Germany, the United States was not disposed to risk the added danger of a Nazi triumph over the Soviet Union.

Meanwhile the United States concentrated on the "Battle of the Atlantic," as the increasing onslaught by German submarines on shipping was commonly called. The submarine menace this time was far worse than it had been in 1917: then the area of infested waters was comparatively restricted to the region of the British Isles, in 1941 mechanical improvements had immensely extended the cruising range of submarines. In contrast to 1917 the greatest zone of danger was far out on the Atlantic, where long-range German scouting planes spotted enemy vessels and reported their location to lurking U-boats. Nearer home waters the British had been able to organize their convoys and use their aircraft to such effect as to beat off the submarine, on the other side of the ocean the Canadians were rendering yeoman service with a growing navy of destroyers, corvettes, and other pursuit ships. Still the combined British and Canadian strength was not sufficient to protect the fleets of merchant ships all the way across the ocean. According to Mr. Roosevelt, in May 1941 the Germans were sinking at the rate of two to every one produced in British and American yards together.

On the Battle of the Atlantic hung the outcome of the war. If the sea lanes to Britain were not kept open and made comparatively safe for shipping, the Lend-Lease Act, it is needless to point out, would prove futile. Two basic steps were essential: (1) American naval and air power had to be used to make the convoy system effective, and (2) the available tonnage had to be greatly increased. Both

of these steps were logical corollaries of the Lend-Lease Act; but because they entailed what was coming to be called a "shooting war," from which public sentiment recoiled, the government resorted to some indirection in putting them into effect. The Gallup polls showed how hard it was for the public to face the logic of the situation. In April 1941, a month after the passage of the Lend-Lease Act, only 41 per cent favored convoying, by June the percentage had risen to 55, and in October 62 per cent advocated "shoot-at-sight," which as a practical measure was more drastic than merely convoying. By this time an American destroyer also, the "Greer," had been fired upon, and the President in a speech on September 11 had announced that, pursuant to a policy of active defense, the "rattlesnakes of the Atlantic" would be shot at sight. It was partly a matter of keeping the public abreast of the facts and the seriousness of the situation in the Atlantic, and then waiting until reason had overcome sentiment. Meanwhile the Germans had notified the United States that they had officially extended their war zone westward in the Atlantic so as to enclose the island of Iceland and approach near to the shores of Greenland. The move was, of course, intended to imperil the Iceland route now being used to the British Isles, but it was a striking illustration of Germany's ability to zone off large sections of the ocean and carry the war to America's doorstep. It was practical evidence of the myth that the Atlantic furnished natural protection, a myth which received its deathblow the next year when the Germans effectively operated against coastwise shipping along the Atlantic Coast.

This growing warfare in the North Atlantic enabled the President to make use of the ancient slogan, "freedom of the seas," in order to justify a "shooting war." It was a case of appealing to a historical memory: the Nazis, said Mr. Roosevelt, were trying to abolish freedom of the seas, like the French in 1798 and the Barbary pirates in 1805. "Freedom of the seas" in 1941 was something of an anachronism, however, made so partly by the United States itself through its neutrality laws obliging the President to proclaim a war zone from which American shipping was to be barred. As a battle cry it had not the same power to excite anger as it had a hundred years before, or even in the preceding World War. And it certainly had scant relation to the facts. The stark truth of the issue in 1941 was, as the United States government itself had repeatedly asserted, whether or not the control of the Atlantic was to remain in British and American hands. If the high seas ever were converted into a Nazi lake, American security was a thing of the

past; moreover, the United States could not make its policies effective unless the submarines were driven from the ocean.¹⁷

Preparations to make the Iceland route effective, as a matter of fact, had gone forward without delay shortly after the passage of the Lend-Lease Act. The government had had no intention of fatuously allowing the Germans a foothold in this area. On April 10 American forces planted a base near the southern tip of Greenland, thus guarding the flank of the route to Iceland and heading off a possible Nazi attempt to set up an air or submarine base from which to harass shipping in the rear. Three months later came an agreement with the Icelandic and British governments whereby American forces were gradually to replace British troops in the protection of that precious halfway station. By this time Russia also was in the war, and Iceland was to prove an equally important junction on the route to Murmansk and Archangel.

When on May 27 Mr. Roosevelt proclaimed the unlimited national emergency, he also made a veiled announcement of the intention to convoy. The American patrol (which had existed since the beginning of the war) had been extended and strengthened in North and South Atlantic waters. Its purpose was to "warn of the presence of attacking raiders, on the sea, under the sea, and above the sea." "Our patrols are helping now to insure delivery of the needed supplies in Britain," he added. "*All additional measures necessary to deliver the goods will be taken.*"¹⁸

The precise date when the "patrol" became a "convoy" remains a naval secret. Considering the complex organization involved in the wartime convoy system, a real distinction between a patrol and a convoy is doubtful. Patrols are necessary to convoys in that they scout the seas and warn the convoying ships by radio of lurking danger. American patrols were doing scout duty and informing British and Canadian warships of the whereabouts of enemy U-boats some time before engaging in actual convoy themselves. Nevertheless, the government was loath to drop the use of the word "patrol." Its destroyer "Greer," which was "attacked" by a submarine, strictly speaking was on patrol duty; it was advised by a British plane of the presence of a submarine, the plane attacked the U-boat, and the "Greer" gave chase and was itself fired upon in return. It was a case of the pot calling the kettle black. The U.S.S. "Kearny," dam-

¹⁷ Compare the next group of cases on "Freedom of the Seas." The President's speech was broadcast from the White House on September 11, 1941. *Department of State Bulletin*, V (No. 116), 193-97.

¹⁸ *Department of State Bulletin*, IV (No. 101), 647-54. Italics inserted.

aged by a torpedo on October 17, was on convoy duty, though the government at first announced it as on patrol: it went to the rescue of a convoy that had been attacked. When the U.S.S. "Reuben James" was sunk on October 30, she was on convoy duty in the literal sense of the word; she was with one convoy and went on call to the aid of another which the Germans had engaged. The incident of the "Kearny" forced the Administration to drop the mask, and on October 27, three days before the sinking of the "Reuben James," Mr. Roosevelt delivered a fighting speech in which he wound up with the words, "We Americans have cleared our decks and taken our battle stations!"¹⁰

Meanwhile there were a number of ways in which the question of securing adequate tonnage was tackled. Danish, Italian, and German ships were commandeered, as we have already noted, and put into service; many, perhaps most of them, in company with an unpublished number of American ships, were put under foreign registry, particularly Panamanian, so as to avoid embarrassments over the Neutrality Law. By this simple legal device the vessels could be used anywhere in the world regardless of the existence of war zones. The final hurdle, and the one which the Administration was most cautious in approaching, was the repeal of those parts of the anachronistic Neutrality Law which kept American flag ships out of war zones. Public opinion, according to Gallup, was more stubborn on this issue than it was on that of convoys; moreover, on this occasion legislative action was required, whereas in the ordering of naval ships and planes to duty the President had a clear field. After the incident of the "Greer" the time appeared ripe for repeal.

The isolationists made a last stand, and the debate consumed a month. Naturally the Administration desired and asked for the right to arm American ships, and it had a number of sinkings on the high seas with which to fortify its arguments. One of the most spectacular, the "Robin Moor," had occurred in the preceding May. This was an unescorted American ship bound from New York to Capetown with a general cargo; the cruelty inflicted on passengers and crew, who were turned loose in small boats far from shore, was wholly in keeping with the traditions of U-boat warfare but in view of the declared policy of the United States under Lend-Lease the attack occasioned only mild surprise. Compared to the emotions generated in 1917, the American public in 1941 remained objective and refused to be swept off its feet by wrath over such inhuman but none the less commonplace occurrences as the torpedoing of the

¹⁰ *Department of State Bulletin*, V (No 123), 341-44.

"Robin Moor." The Neutrality Act was finally repealed, with respect to the sections relating to shipping, on November 13, but only after events had more than caught up with the law. The sinking of the "Reuben James" had reduced it to the hollowest mockery²⁰

While the United States was thus more and more making its weight felt in the vast struggle, President Roosevelt and the Prime Minister of Great Britain, Winston Churchill, found a unique way in which to dramatize the importance of the Battle of the Atlantic. They met at sea, each visiting the other on the quarterdeck of a battleship of his respective nation. Probably the chief worth of the meeting was its symbolism—the spectacle of Anglo-American solidarity and the bold intimation that the Atlantic was an Anglo-American lake and was intended so to remain. What practical decisions of policy were reached at this conference were, of course, kept a secret. But to satisfy a growing demand, especially in the United States, for a statement of war aims, the two heads of states issued a declaration of eight principles which by common consent went down into history as the Atlantic Charter, August 14, 1941.

The Atlantic Charter was by no means a sketch of peace terms, it contained nothing so specific as President Wilson's Fourteen Points, for instance. It fell short of the evangelism that had earmarked that document, and grounded itself in the stark fact of Anglo-American power. The two countries sought no aggrandizement, territorial or other; they desired to see no territorial changes contrary to the freely expressed wishes of the people concerned, they respected the right of all peoples to choose their own form of government; they would "endeavor, *with due respect for their existing obligations*, to further the enjoyment of all States, great or small, victor or vanquished, of access, on equal terms, to the trade and to the raw materials of the world which are needed for their economic prosperity", and they desired to bring about the "fullest collaboration between all nations in the economic field with the object of securing, for all, improved labor standards, economic adjustment and social security", they also wanted a peace that "should enable

²⁰ Strangely the vote was close in both Houses, in marked contrast to the resounding majorities for Lend-Lease. There was an irritating labor issue at this time and a strong desire, particularly in the House, to "punish" the President for his favoritism toward labor.

The sections of the Neutrality Law relating to loans to belligerents and travel by American citizens on belligerent ships remained technically in force. In view of the Lend-Lease Act, these in company with the Johnson Act can be indulgently regarded as legislative curiosities. The prohibition against loans was finally amended by joint resolution in February 1942 so as to make it inoperative when the United States itself was at war.

all men to traverse the high seas and oceans without hindrance." This last appears to be an innocuous reference to the ancient shibboleth of "freedom of the seas."

But the heart of the Atlantic Charter was to be found in the Sixth and Eighth Points, which contained a clear manifesto that Germany must be defeated and disarmed, and that no peace is possible prior to the realization of such a condition. "*After the final destruction of the Nazi tyranny,*" continued the Charter, the two powers "hope to see established a peace which will afford to all nations the means of dwelling in safety within their own boundaries They believe that all of the nations of the world, for realistic as well as spiritual reasons, must come to the abandonment of the use of force. *Since no future peace can be maintained if land, sea or air armaments continue to be employed by nations which threaten or may threaten, aggression outside of their frontiers,* they believe, pending the establishment of a wider and permanent system of general security, *that the disarmament of such nations is essential . . .*"²¹

The Atlantic Charter was also marked by its omission of all reference to Japan and the Pacific. That country, let us recall, had openly reiterated her solidarity with Germany and Italy in a treaty of alliance signed on September 27, 1940. Each recognized the "new order" desired by the other in its respective region; Japan recognized the leadership of Germany and Italy in Europe, while they in turn accorded Nippon the honor of leadership in Greater East Asia. Furthermore, the three powers "would assist one another with all political, economic, and military means when one of the powers was attacked by a power not then involved in the European war or in the Chinese-Japanese conflict." The alliance was obviously notification to the United States to keep its hands off both Europe and Asia, and implied a threat that, if the United States exchanged blows with Germany in the Atlantic, Japan would strike in the rear from the Pacific. It had no influence on American policy other than to confirm the impression gained in 1936 that the three powers had joined hands in a common program of plunder. The alliance had come about, Secretary Hull believed, primarily because of "Hitler's effort to divert attention from his failure to invade Great Britain and to preserve his prestige by a sensational announcement of something that already existed."²²

²¹ Text in *Department of State Bulletin*, V (No 112), 125-26. I have italicized such portions as seem to need emphasis.

²² Quoted from *Peace and War—United States Foreign Policy, 1931-1941*, *op. cit.*

In a very real sense Japan was an active ally of Germany through this period; while she did not "attack" the United States nor even Great Britain, she nevertheless continued on the march through China and the South Pacific and immobilized the greater part of American naval strength at Pearl Harbor. In January 1941 rumors were reported by Ambassador Grew in Tokyo that she was planning a surprise mass attack on that great base.

Outwardly the United States put more attention on Hitler in 1940-41 than on Japan. Nevertheless, hopes for peace with that power were very faint. Thus on the eve of the passage of the Lend-Lease Act Secretary Hull bluntly warned the new Japanese Ambassador, Admiral Nomura, of the coming clash. How could Japan, he asked, expect the United States "to sit absolutely quiet while two or three nations before our very eyes organized naval and military forces and went out and conquered the balance of the earth, including the seven seas and all trade routes and the other four continents?"²⁸ Some efforts were made to detach Japan from her alliance with Germany, to convince her by argument that the United States and Britain had more to offer than Hitler. But the price demanded by the Japanese for their co-operation never stood the slightest chance of acceptance, and they were no doubt realists enough to appreciate it. It was that the United States should cease aiding Chiang Kai-shek, the Chinese generalissimo, and advise him to negotiate peace with Japan.

The two countries continued to temporize through the summer and fall of 1941. When Germany attacked Russia in June, the State Department asked the Japanese for assurances they would not follow suit; but it got only an evasive response. Then came the full American embargo on trade with Japan. By this time Secretary Hull feared the worst, and advised the British Ambassador of the need for a show of closer Anglo-American collaboration. There was danger, he believed, that the Japanese would "invade by force the whole of the Indian Ocean and the islands and continents adjacent thereto, isolating China, sailing across probably to the mouth of the Suez Canal, to the Persian Gulf oil area, to the Cape of Good Hope area, thereby blocking by a military despotism the trade routes and the supply sources to the British." Such moves would be practically as damaging as a German crossing of the English Channel.

These fears formed part of the backdrop of the Atlantic Conference in August. Apparently apprehensive that the Anglo-Saxon

²⁸ *Ibid.*

powers would seize the initiative in the Pacific, or perhaps eager to test the strength of Anglo-American solidarity, Prince Konoye now sought a conference with Mr. Roosevelt "somewhere in the Pacific." The Japanese were unexpectedly eager for such a conference: they kept urging it through August and September, and they felt that, though a single meeting would hardly untangle the snarl, it nevertheless would have beneficial political effects. Prince Konoye, as an earnest of his sincerity, was prepared to bring along high ranking officers of the Japanese army and navy. The idea seems to have made some appeal to the President—he actually proposed Juneau, Alaska, as the place for holding the meeting. But, though the American government never rejected the Japanese proposal, it never encouraged it. A preliminary agreement on the principles of a settlement was needed first; but the gulf was too wide to make this possible.²⁴ Early in November Mr. Grew dispatched a warning that the Japanese military elements meant war, and that they were capable of "adopting measures with dramatic and dangerous suddenness which might make inevitable a war with the United States."

On Armistice Day the Administration used Secretary Knox as its mouthpiece in issuing a general warning to the American public to expect trouble in the Pacific. A last-minute attempt to exercise persuasion on the Japanese was made when the latter dispatched Saburo Kurusu as its special envoy. The latter came ostensibly to get the United States to ease its embargo. The American government demanded that Japan abrogate her alliance with Germany; but the Japanese in their turn refused. By November 29 Secretary Hull was convinced that war was imminent. He advised the British Ambassador that "the diplomatic part of our relations with Japan was virtually over and that the matter would now go to the officials of the Army and Navy." Yet when the blow did come at Pearl Harbor on the morning of December 7 the armed services were caught unprepared and the damage was so sweeping as to paralyze American naval power in the Pacific for months.²⁵ Germany and Italy imme-

²⁴ *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States. Japan, 1931-1941* (2 vols.), II, 344, 346-47, 642-45, 651-54. Prince Konoye had previously identified himself with the attacks on China and with Japanese expressions of desire for the New Order. It is difficult to accept his desire for this proposed meeting with Roosevelt at its face value.

²⁵ The extracts in this paragraph are from *Peace and War, op cit*. See also chapters 23-24 above for full treatments of the security problems in China and the western Pacific. The reasons for the disaster at Pearl Harbor and the negligence of the Army and Navy were carefully investigated and reported on by a special investigating commission headed by Justice Roberts of the Supreme Court.

In the winter of 1945-46 a Congressional investigation of Pearl Harbor,

diately responded to Pearl Harbor by declaring war on the United States, and Congress replied this time without a dissenting vote.

More than three years of desperate war followed. General George C. Marshall, Chief of Staff of the United States Army, crowds the whole, vast nature of the struggle into one terse passage. "It has been declared axiomatic," he writes, "that a nation cannot successfully wage war on two fronts. With a full appreciation of the difficulties and hazards involved, we felt compelled to wage a war not only on two fronts, but on many fronts. Thus we arrived at the concept of global war in which the vast power of American democracy was to be deployed all over the earth."

The blackest days of the war fell between Pearl Harbor and the middle of the year 1942. In six months the Japanese enemy established an immense perimeter of conquest. He advanced more than half-way across the Pacific, where he was stopped by decisive American naval action at the Battle of Midway; southward he spread out until he almost brushed the northern coast of Australia; heroic resistance by outnumbered American and Australian vessels halted him there in the Battle of the Coral Sea; and driving to the west past Malaya the Jap reached the mountain barriers separating India from Burma. A rush into Burma succeeded in breaking all surface connections between China and her Western allies. Only a thin line of air supply, five hundred miles long, rising over the Himalayan Hump from Assam in India to the Yunnan plateau, kept China breathing.

Meanwhile the German Wehrmacht crashed its way onward toward the East. Two great German armies, one pushing through southern Russia to the Black Sea, the other marching eastward from Tripoli along the shores of North Africa toward the Nile and the Suez Canal, threatened to come together somewhere in the Middle East. Hitler was stalking the ghost of Napoleon on the road to India. The Russians balked him at Rostov near the Caucasus, and the British Eighth Army turned him back at El Alamein, only forty miles to the west of the Nile. The Nazis and the Japanese never closed the gap between them; they missed the control of the great

prompted by the Republicans, was in full swing. Strict impartiality had been promised, but actual performance by the committee in this respect left much to be desired. Certain honest differences of opinion within the government in 1940-41 over what should be done with the United States fleet were brought to light and exploited sensationally in the newspapers. But otherwise by its final report the Congressional committee failed to show how it had improved over the work of the Roberts Commission.

seaway that holds the key to world mastery. Reviewing these crucial months, General Marshall writes:

There can be no doubt that the greed and the mistakes of the war-making nations as well as the heroic stands of the British and Soviet peoples saved the United States a war on her own soil. The crisis had come and passed at Stalingrad and El Alamein before this nation was able to gather sufficient resources to participate in the fight in a determining manner. Had the U.S.S.R. and the British Army of the Nile been defeated in 1942, as they well might if the Germans, Japanese, and Italians had better co-ordinated their plans and resources and successive operations, we should have stood today in the Western Hemisphere confronted by enemies who controlled a greater part of the world.²⁶

A brilliant strategy aimed at a crushing defeat of the Axis powers began in the meantime to emerge from joint British and American councils. A conference in December 1941 of the President, the Prime Minister, and their respective chiefs of staff of the Army, Navy, and Air Forces laid the basic structure "It was the most complete unification of military effort ever achieved by two Allied nations," remarks Marshall "Strategic direction of all the forces of both nations, the allocation of manpower and munitions, the coordination of communications, the control of military intelligence, and the administration of captured areas all were accepted as joint responsibilities "

Operation Torch—the Allied assault on North Africa—was the beginning of the great counter-offensive. It sucked the German armies into a pocket in Tunisia and provided a vast staging area for wresting the Mediterranean from the enemy and for making thrusts by way of Italy at the "soft under-belly of Europe." In January 1943, midway through this campaign, Roosevelt and Churchill met again at Casablanca, Morocco, to mark out the next steps. It had been their intention from the very outset to strike first at Germany—the nearer and greater enemy—confining the operations in the Pacific to limited offensives and to the holding of the Hawaiian-Australian line. The target date for Operation Roundup—the final blow to be delivered across the English Channel—had been set, as far back as April 1942, for the summer of 1943. This date proved to be a year in advance of the possible, however the logistical under-

²⁶ *Biennial Report of the Chief of Staff of the United States Army, July 1, 1943 to June 30, 1945, to the Secretary of War*. This Report, written in simple, vigorous prose, is destined to live as one of the great documents of military history. It is printed in its entirety in the *New York Times*, October 10, 1945. I have drawn heavily from it for this résumé of the military operations of the war.

taking was too much for the resources of the Allies, and the Middle East had to be saved at all costs. The Casablanca Conference recognized these problems but publicly announced a determination to seek the unconditional surrender of Germany, and ordered that preparations for the massing of an attack on Germany from the United Kingdom be hastened. Then in May 1943 came another vital meeting of the heads of government and the combined chiefs. "This meeting [at Washington]," declares General Marshall, "may prove to be one of the most historic military conclaves of this war, for here the specific strategy to which the movements of the land, sea, and air forces of the Americans and British Allies conformed was translated into firm commitments." This conference, known by its code word Trident, decided upon forcing Italy out of the war and executing a daring raid by air on the German oil supply at Ploesti, Rumania, a feat that was accomplished with astounding success in the following August. The Trident Conference also planned the final blow—appropriately renamed Overlord—and set the target date for the spring of 1944, in the meantime it ordered unremitting pressure on the Japanese, an increase in the flow of matériel to the Chinese across the Himalayan Hump, and a series of assaults by American forces on the Aleutian Islands, the Marshalls, the Carolines, the Solomons, the Bismarck Archipelago, and the uncaptured portions of New Guinea.

Nine months after the first Allied landings in North Africa, enemy forces were cleared out and Sicily captured. The Allies now had a bridge to Italy; and on September 8, 1943, that hapless country yielded unconditionally. Meanwhile two other offensive movements were planned. Operation Anvil, an assault on southern France with the object of effecting a lodgment in the Toulon-Marseilles area and working northward up the Rhone Valley, and Operation Avalanche, the invasion of the Italian mainland with the object of keeping the German divisions in Italy busy and of capturing bases from which shuttle bombing could be conducted against Germany and the Balkans.

But Operation Overlord was the supreme undertaking. "Victory in this global war depended on the successful execution of Overlord," writes Marshall. "That must not fail." He continues:

Yet the Japanese could not be permitted meanwhile to entrench in their stolen empire, and China must not be allowed to fall victim to further Japanese assaults. Allied resources were searched through again and again, and strategy reconsidered in the light of the deficiencies. These conclusions seemed inescapable. France must be invaded in 1944, to

shorten the war by facilitating the advance westward of the Soviet forces. At the same time German technological advances such as the development of atomic explosives made it imperative that we attack before these terrible weapons could be turned against us. In addition, the pressure on the Japanese in the Pacific must not be relaxed. Communications with China must be reopened. Resources were allocated accordingly. The balance was extremely delicate but we had to go ahead.

Conferences at Cairo and at Tehran dealt with these problems. The first meeting, held in November 1943, was unique in that Chiang Kai-shek, the Chinese generalissimo, sat for the first time with his Western allies. But the meeting at Tehran, the capital of Iran, was an even more extraordinary event because of the presence of Josef Stalin. Separate conferences were essential for appearances' sake: Russia was studiously neutral in the struggle with Japan. But the Tehran conclave followed immediately after the meeting at Cairo, public declarations summing up the results of the respective conferences were issued simultaneously, and the impression seems to have been intended that the Soviet Union would sooner or later identify itself openly with the war in the Far East. Indeed, it is commonly supposed, though not immediately proved, that it was at Tehran that the Russian leader pledged his eventual entry into that phase of the global struggle.²⁷

Meanwhile preparations for Overlord were pushed relentlessly. In August 1943 there was but a single American division on the soil of the United Kingdom, and the shipping of the two powers was strained almost to capacity by the demands of the Mediterranean operations. On D-Day, June 6, 1944, the United States Army had 1,533,000 men mobilized in Britain, an average of 150,000 per month having been transported thither during the interim. Bombs fell on Hitler's Fortress Europe now by day and by night. A shuttle system between bases in the United Kingdom and Italy started in mid-August 1943, in the following June a second such service was inaugurated between Italy and the Soviet Union. Then came the great day of the assault on the Normandy beaches, chosen "after long study of the strength of German coastal defenses and the disposition of German divisions." The beach areas totaled ten thousand yards in length. Every seventy-five yards a landing craft loaded with assault infantry touched down. "By the second morning it was clear that the beachhead was secure and that the greatest and

²⁷ Texts of the Declarations of Cairo and Tehran in *The Department of State Bulletin*, Nos. 232 and 233 [December 4 and 11, 1943], Vol. IX.

longest step toward the destruction of the German armies of the west had been taken."

From the beaches of Normandy to the banks of the Rhine the battle raged for nine months. To describe the complexities and difficulties of this dazzling campaign of American and British armies, supported to an increasing degree by Free French forces, is beyond the range of this book. The liberation of France was the immediate goal, and it was achieved swiftly, efficiently, and brilliantly, but at heavy cost in blood and equipment. Paris was entered on August 25, meanwhile the American Seventh Army had executed a landing in southern France (Operation Anvil), and started up the Rhone Valley; strong pockets of German resistance remained, to the very end of hostilities, in control of the critical French ports to prevent their use by the Allies, but in spite of the almost insuperable handicaps of transport and supply, the victorious armies had the defeated foe streaming back toward the Rhine by the first of September. British troops took the vital port of Antwerp twelve days later. More than two months were required to clear its ruined harbor, but at length this port proved to be a great asset in shortening the lines of supply. Beginning in late November it handled 25,000 tons of stores daily, in spite of the V-bombs the Germans expended on it in the desperate hope of keeping the port unusable. Pushed almost to the Rhine, the Wehrmacht dealt its last great blow in December, hoping to recover Antwerp, it drove a wedge fifty miles deep into the American line in Belgium. This German offensive held up the Allied advance six weeks but failed to achieve any important objective.

Meanwhile, at Yalta in the Crimea, amidst scenes of destruction wrought by the Nazis, Churchill, Roosevelt, and the combined chiefs met with Marshal Stalin and the Russian generals to plan in detail the doom of Germany. The Conference filled eight days in February 1945, and at its close the three powers were able to announce a very close working partnership on the part of their military staffs, which they declared would shorten the war. The end was nearer than perhaps even the military heads had thought. Soviet armies were already in Hungary and on their way up the Danube; other Russian armies were advancing through Poland into Germany itself. But one of the most fortunate breaks in the war occurred on March 7, 1945, the day of the fall of Cologne: American forces, probing the Rhine south of the city, found a bridge across the river that the Germans had failed to destroy. "Such a windfall," observed General Marshall, "had been hoped for but not expected." He went on:

The prompt seizure and exploitation of the crossing demonstrated American initiative and adaptability at its best, from the daring action of the platoon leader to the Army commander who quickly redirected all his moving columns in a demonstration of brilliant staff management. He established powerful elements across the river immediately in accordance with direct orders from General Eisenhower. The bridgehead provided a serious threat to the heart of Germany, a diversion of incalculable value both to the main effort in the Ruhr and to the reduction of the Saar-Palatinate. It became a springboard for the final offensive to come.

Statements by captured German generals indicate that they expected to hold the Rhine. The establishment of the bridgehead at Remagen, however, denied them this possibility. Before the end of the month the British and Americans had built seven bridges across the river, and, with the Russians closing in on Berlin from the East, the Allies were at last ready for the kill. There was a rush across Germany to the Elbe, and another quick advance into the heart of Bavaria and the Harz Mountains, aimed at destroying any hope the Nazis might have had of "holing" themselves up in the rugged country of southeast Germany. Under such punishing blows Germany literally disintegrated, her crazed Fuehrer, Hitler, shot himself, and his body, soaked in gasoline, was burned by his fanatical followers; and one by one the remainder of the Nazi gang were rounded up and imprisoned in the jail at Nuremberg, the city whence they had sallied forth to conquer the world. "Surrounded on all fronts by chaos and overwhelming defeat," concluded General Marshall, "the emissaries of the German Government surrendered to the Allies at Reims on 7 May 1945, all land, sea, and air forces of the Reich."

The defeat of Japan was near at hand too. The basic strategy against the Nipponese enemy had been laid down more than two years previously at Casablanca. The assault was to be made by a series of amphibious attacks across the far reaches of the Pacific, spearheaded by the Navy. "Oceans are formidable barriers," observes Marshall, "but for the nation enjoying naval superiority they become high-roads of invasion." But it was equally important to prevent the Japanese in the meantime from strangling China. The transport capacity over the Himalayan Hump had to be multiplied many times; an offensive campaign in Burma had to be planned. These twin undertakings are to be numbered among the most difficult and hazardous of the war. In January 1943 the flow of cargo over the Hump was a thin trickle; four months after it was

ordered raised to 10,000 tons per month, and in August of the same year this amount was ordered to be doubled. By January 1945 the Hump cargo reached a capacity volume of 46,000 tons per month. Meanwhile a China-Burma-India theater of operations was created. The problem of re-establishing surface connections with China was given special attention at the Cairo Conference. A road from Ledo in Assam across the most formidable mountain terrain on the face of the globe was undertaken. And in May 1944 Chinese and American forces fought their way into Myitkyina, the key to northern Burma. "Out at the end of the thinnest supply line of all," General Stilwell and his command in this area performed one of the most herculean efforts of the war: with aid from British troops, who successfully assaulted Rangoon on the coast, they had the Japanese cleared out of Burma by the end of January 1945. American landings under MacArthur in the Philippines and American naval operations in the China Sea had meanwhile cut the enemy supply line to Burma.

Combined operations in the Pacific led to the mastery of that ocean in less than a year. They began with the seizure of the Gilbert Islands in November 1943; two months later came an invasion of the Marshalls, and by July 1944 Operation Forager had resulted in the occupation of the key islands of Guam and Saipan in the Marianas. Meanwhile MacArthur had been advancing, leap-frog fashion, along the coast of New Guinea in the direction of the Philippines. In this region, as in the island clusters to the north and east, scores of enemy-held islands were by-passed: "hundreds of thousands of Japanese troops were isolated in the jungles of the Pacific islands, dying on the vine, and of no further use to their Emperor." The Philippines campaign began on schedule in August 1944, and Manila Bay was open early in the following March. By this date, too, Iwo Jima in the Bonins had been taken in a desperate battle, the first landing on Okinawa in the Ryukus had been made, "from California to the coast of China the vast Pacific abounded with American power," and the day of final reckoning was at hand.

The invasion and final subjugation of Japan were scheduled to start in the fall of 1945 with a three-pronged attack on Kyushu, the southernmost of the Japanese main islands. Operation Coronet was to follow in the early spring of 1946—a final landing on the plain east of Tokyo. But these dread blows never fell. American and British men-o'-war roamed the home waters of the Island Empire and cut the last communications with the mainland; bombs

rained down incessantly on Japanese cities. Then on August 6, 1945, an event took place that startled the entire world: a single atomic bomb, a weapon for which the scientists of all the principal belligerents had been searching since the beginning of the war, was loosed on Hiroshima. A city of 200,000 people suddenly perished. Three days later the port of Nagasaki met a similar fate. Meanwhile Soviet armies, long poised on the Manchurian border, advanced aggressively into the province. Harbin fell. On August 10, 1945, the Emperor of Japan sued for peace.

The Second World War was a decisive struggle. The United Nations aimed at and achieved the unconditional surrender of their enemies. The idea of unconditional surrender originated with the two Anglo-American powers, who gave to it its first expression in the Atlantic Charter. At Casablanca in January 1943 they reiterated their intentions, and a fate that had previously been decreed for Germany was by mutual agreement pronounced for Japan. Italy, however, was the first of the Axis enemies to cry enough, and it was there that the Allies gained their first experience in the joint management of a defeated country. An Allied Control Commission was set up, and a new and humble Italian government had to take orders from the commission. Weak gestures of aid to the Allies in the hard task of driving the German enemy from Italian soil helped to lighten the punishment; Italy became a co-belligerent of the United Nations; and, in spite of her pitiable condition, she appeared two years later to be responding to the joint efforts of her own government and the Control Commission to get her back on her feet.²⁸

It was at Tehran—primarily a military conclave—that the Soviet Union joined the two Western allies in pledging the destruction of Germany. But not until the Conference in the Crimea, three months before the end, did the outlines of the surrender terms begin

²⁸ The Italian armistice was signed September 29, 1943, but for reasons not fully explained the terms were kept secret until November 6, 1945, six months after the surrender of Germany. Britain and the United States knocked Italy out of the war, and they continued to campaign against German armies on Italian soil with aid only from the lesser members of the United Nations. Russia was not a participant in the Italian campaigns, but as one of the Big Three she was given a voice in the settlement. Actually, however, this admission of the Soviet Union to a share in the work of the Allied Control Commission was less important than it might seem: the final authority in Italy was vested not in the Commission but in the Allied commander-in-chief.

Control Councils were later set up in Rumania, Bulgaria, Finland, and Hungary on the model of the Italian example; and in these countries, too, the ultimate authority was placed in the hands of the military commander, in each case a Russian. (*New York Times*, Nov. 7, 1945)

to emerge. It was agreed that the forces of the three powers would each occupy a separate zone of Germany; that there would be a Central Control Commission composed of the supreme commanders of the three powers with headquarters in Berlin; that France would be invited to participate as a fourth member of the Commission and to take over a zone of her own, and that reparation to the fullest possible extent would be exacted from Germany in compensation for the damage she had done. "It is our inflexible purpose to destroy German militarism and Nazism and to ensure that Germany will never again be able to disturb the peace of the world," said the three great Allies.

We are determined to disarm and disband all German armed forces; break up for all time the German General Staff that has repeatedly contrived the resurgence of German militarism; remove or destroy all German military equipment; eliminate or control all German industry that could be used for military production; bring all war criminals to just and swift punishment and exact reparation in kind for the destruction wrought by the Germans; wipe out the Nazi Party, Nazi laws, organizations and institutions, remove all Nazi and militarist influences from public office and from the cultural and economic life of the German people²⁹

Victory came at last in May, as we have seen. And if any sign to the German people was needed to underline the crushing nature of their defeat, it was given by the heads of the three victorious powers meeting in July at Potsdam, the ancient seat of Prussian militarism. Astride the prostrate body of Germany, Britain and the United States, joined by China, summoned Japan to surrender. "Following

²⁹ Text of the Report of the Crimea Conference in *The Department of State Bulletin* (No. 295), XII, 213-16. It was implemented by a declaration signed in Berlin, June 5, 1945, by the supreme commanders of the United States, Russian, British, and French armies, and the declaration was in turn ratified by the Potsdam Conference in July. *Ibid.* (No. 311), XII, 1051-55; XIII (No. 319), 153-61.

The Declaration of June 5 vested supreme authority over Germany in the governments of the United States, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, and the Provisional Government of the French Republic; but it also announced that the four powers would consult with the governments of other United Nations in connection with the exercise of this authority. The Declaration, moreover, enumerated the requirements to be laid on the defeated enemy, divided the country into four specified zones of occupation, and provided for the machinery of Inter-Allied control. Each commander-in-chief was to be supreme in his respective zone, but was to sit with the other three on the Control Council. The Greater Berlin area was to constitute a fifth zone to be governed directly by the Control Council. Inasmuch as the city was surrounded by the Russian zone, however, and was occupied in the main by Russian troops, the real administration remained in Soviet hands.

are our terms," they declared "We will not deviate from them. There are no alternatives. We shall brook no delay."

There must be eliminated for all time the authority and influence of those who have deceived and misled the people of Japan into embarking on world conquest, for we insist that a new order of peace, security and justice will be impossible until irresponsible militarism is driven from the world.

Until such a new order is established and until there is convincing proof that Japan's war-making power is destroyed, points in Japanese territory to be designated by the Allies shall be occupied to secure the achievement of the basic objectives we are here setting forth.

. . . Japanese sovereignty shall be limited to the islands of Honshu, Hokkaido, Kyushu, Shikoku and such minor islands as we determine.

The Japanese military forces, after being completely disarmed, shall be permitted to return to their homes with the opportunity to lead peaceful and productive lives.

We do not intend that the Japanese shall be enslaved as a race or destroyed as a nation, but stern justice shall be meted out to all war criminals. . . .

Japan shall be permitted to maintain such industries as will sustain her economy and permit the exaction of just reparations in kind, but not those which would enable her to re-arm for war. To this end, access to, as distinguished from control of, raw materials shall be permitted. Eventual Japanese participation in world trade relations shall be permitted.³⁰

³⁰ *The Department of State Bulletin*, XIII (No. 318), 137-38. In spite of the dire wording of this document, its terms are noticeably less thorough than those of the Berlin Declaration with respect to Germany. The German State was destroyed, and the members of the former German government and general staff arrested and imprisoned like common criminals. Furthermore, the Allies offered no pledge ever to restore Germany sovereignty or independence.

The approach to Japan was quite different. The Allies laid their demands upon the Japanese government, a gesture they had scorned to make in the case of the Nazis. Moreover, they volunteered explicit pledges, including the statement that Japanese sovereignty would be limited to the homeland. Thus the Japanese state was to be permitted to continue, and the way smoothed for a restoration of full sovereignty at some future time. After a short period of hesitation following the surrender, the Emperor was allowed to remain as head of the Japanese state, though subject to the orders of the Supreme Commander, General Douglas MacArthur. Unlike the other vanquished nations, therefore, Japan was placed under the sole authority of the supreme commander without the advice of an Inter-Allied Control Council. But in other respects the legal position of Japan was more like that of Italy than of Germany.

For the sake of form the Potsdam Declaration was signed only by the President of the United States and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, and was concurred in by the President of China, who was not present. The Russian Generalissimo was present, but being still "neutral" in the war against Japan he did not sign the declaration.

These terms the Japanese government accepted, but only after it had first tasted the bitter price of defiance. Thus ended the greatest war of all time, like its predecessor of 1914-18, a war fought by a coalition of powers. But this time a sense of unity and of permanence of purpose was achieved on a scale never before imagined. The United Nations had been a going concern since January 1, 1942. On that date twenty-five countries, all belligerents in the war against the Axis, joined with the American government in a declaration pledging themselves to full military and economic co-operation and agreeing not to make a separate peace. Before the close of hostilities the number of members of the organization had risen to thirty-nine.⁸¹ During the three years of combat all over the world the United Nations demonstrated a capacity for acting in unison vastly greater than that of the wartime alliance familiar to history. They demonstrated it in the network of mutual-aid agreements, upon which rested the vital problems of supply and transport; but they demonstrated it most successfully by the merging of combat forces under single United Nations commands.⁸²

At all times during the war, relations between Russia and the Anglo-American Allies constituted the keystone of victory. Solidarity on a scale achieved by the English-speaking nations among themselves was hardly to be expected. The Russian command operated entirely apart from the Anglo-American commands throughout the war. Nevertheless, a concerted strategy on all sides was of the essence of victory, and it was achieved at Tehran and again at the Crimea Conference. Furthermore, the war closed on a solemn note proclaimed in the Crimea by the three great leaders—Roosevelt, Churchill, Stalin. "Victory in this war and establishment of the proposed international organization [of the United Nations]," they declared, "will provide the greatest opportunity in all history to create in the years to come the essential conditions of [permanent] peace."

⁸¹ Argentina was edged into the organization at the last moment to make the fortieth member, but her presence was decorative only. See above (p. 248).

⁸² Edward R. Stettinius, Jr., *Lend-Lease, Weapon for Victory* (New York, 1944), is a brilliant and convincing account of the mutual aid system by the man who was Lend-Lease Administrator of the United States before he became Secretary of State. It should be supplemented by a perusal of President Roosevelt's semi-annual reports on Lend-Lease to Congress.

CHAPTER 27

THE UNITED NATIONS

GREAT HOPES and painstaking preparations distinguished American diplomacy in its quest for a better and safer world to be built from the wreckage of the Second World War. Long before the atomic bomb burst over Hiroshima, concepts of American national security and visions of a collective peace had been knit together. Sheer survival, it was now believed, hinged upon success in developing an orderly and law-abiding family of nations. The war would bring total victory over the enemy—of that there was no doubt. But those with foresight at least saw that, far from simplifying the requirements of American security, the awful struggle would raise up new and formidable questions with which to wrestle. German and Japanese aggressions might be stilled forever, but new international rivalries were already in the making, with the two largest of the victors cast in the roles of future enemies. The affairs of the United States and the Soviet Union would require exceedingly careful management. Russian co-operation proved elusive even during the war; it was only in November 1943, we remember, nearly two years after Pearl Harbor, that a diplomatic bridge was built between Washington and London and Moscow. A foreign ministers' meeting in the latter capital smoothed the way for the conference at Tehran of the heads of government. It was this occasion also which furnished the first open recognition on the part of the Big Four Powers that not only must they hang together after the war was over, but they must make themselves responsible for establishing a permanent international organization open to all "peace-loving" states, large and small.

American diplomacy aimed at binding Russia ever more firmly to this proposition. Closely seconded by the British government, it brought together in the early fall of 1944 delegations from the four powers for the drafting of definite proposals for the formation of a general world organization. The Soviet Union subscribed to these proposals at Dumbarton Oaks; it concurred again at the conference in the Crimea in the following February; and it there joined the United States and Great Britain in announcing April 25, 1945 as the opening date of a conference of all the United Nations at San

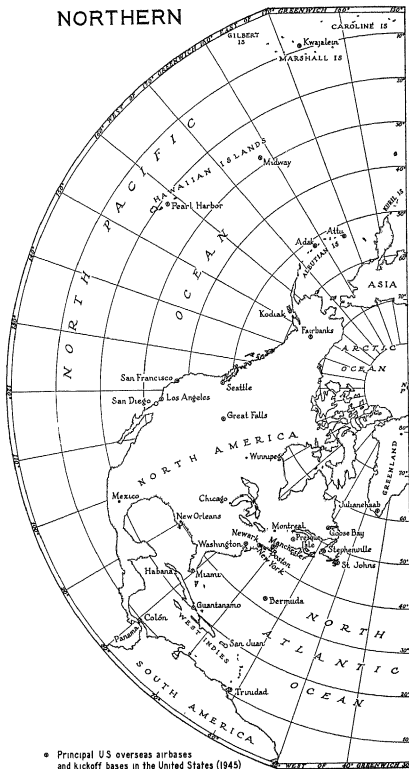
Francisco for the preparation of a charter¹. A solid front on the part of the Big Four was thus preserved. Their plans for future world organization seemed to be as much in harmony as was the growing proof of prearranged strategy against the Germans. Still it appears that the Russians had to be coaxed in the direction of San Francisco; they let it be known that, in contrast to the imposing delegation of the other great powers, they intended to assign the Soviet part merely to their ambassador in Washington; and only a last-minute appeal from the American government to Mr. Stalin personally brought the Russian foreign minister, Molotov, to the United States to head the Soviet delegation to the Conference.

Meanwhile Washington strained every nerve to avoid the mistakes of Woodrow Wilson. No detail was overlooked in arousing the public to the need of a permanent organization, nor were the political opponents of the administration given any excuse to complain that they had been ignored. The Proposals that emerged from Dumbarton Oaks were submitted to public discussion and criticism on a scale probably unique in the annals of American politics. Forty-two prominent organizations, such as the Federal Council of Churches, were invited to present their views, and persons named by them were made consultants to the Department of State. Thus was American public opinion primed on the subject of the Charter well in advance, the hard core of a permanent four-power alliance, which the Proposals frankly made the nucleus of a workable peace system, was accepted almost without a murmur; but under the inspiration of such men as John Foster Dulles American idealism reasserted itself by insisting that the Charter be pitched to a higher key of justice and fundamental human rights. The Preamble, which was entirely missing from the Dumbarton Oaks document, is believed to have been partly of his authorship.

In the meantime President Roosevelt selected a delegation drawn equally from the ranks of the two major parties. Senator Connally of Texas, the Democratic chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, was made a member, but so was Arthur H. Vandenberg, the Republican leader in the Senate. Vandenberg had delivered a statesmanlike address supporting in full the implications of a permanent alliance. Furthermore, he was forthright in helping

¹ Documents connected with the Tripartite Conference in Moscow are to be found in *The Department of State Bulletin* (No. 228 [November 6, 1943]), XI, 307-11; the Dumbarton Oaks Proposals are in *ibid.*, XI (No. 276 [October 8, 1944]), 368-76; while the announcement from the Crimea is in XII (No. 295 [February 18, 1945]), 215.

NORTHERN



• Principal US overseas airbases
and kickoff bases in the United States (1945)

HEMISPHERE



to lay the ghost of an issue which, if it were allowed to grow, might well have taken all realism from the proposed Charter: Must the President, in the event of the need arising for joint military action, seek first the consent of Congress? Fear of the rebirth of German and Japanese military tyranny, declared Vandenberg, framed the worst doubt concerning the future. He said

Surely we can agree that we do not want an instant's hesitation . . . about our military cooperation in the peremptory use of force, if needed, to keep Germany and Japan permanently demilitarized. Such a crisis would be the lengthened shadow of the present war. . . . There should be no need to refer any such action back to Congress any more than Congress would expect to pass upon battle plans today. The Commander in Chief should have instant power to act, and he should act.²

The attitude of the Senate in 1945 was quite different from what it had been at the end of the previous war

In the midst of these elaborate preparations for the San Francisco Conference, President Franklin D. Roosevelt suddenly passed away. Death took place on April 12, a bare two weeks before the scheduled opening of the Conference. The world was thunderstruck; its fate had seemed to lie in the hands of three men—Roosevelt, Churchill, Stalin. The Department of State was now in charge of an inexperienced Secretary, Mr. Stettinius; the Vice-President, Harry S. Truman, was the usual accident familiar to this office. Yet the United States continued to play its part unflinchingly in the war, and the United Nations began their deliberations at San Francisco according to plan. The smoothness of the performance was a credit to the untried leaders who were thus hurled to the stage front, and a tribute to the forethought that had been spent in preparing for it.

The conversations among the four powers at Dumbarton Oaks had consumed nearly two months. Out of them had come a document 3,500 words long which the great powers were willing to lay before the world as their joint plan for a permanent organization. The Conference at San Francisco included delegations from fifty nations and was to last nine weeks. From it emerged the Charter, 10,000 words in length, preserving the core of the Dumbarton Oaks Proposals but substantially enriched as a result of the pro-

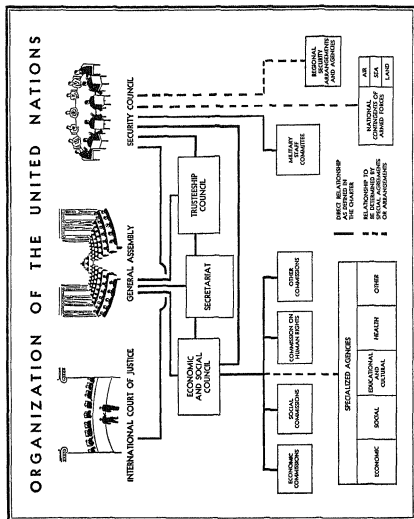
² *New York Times*, January 11, 1945. It will be recalled that in 1919 the Lodge reservations to the Covenant of the League insisted that the President get the prior consent of Congress before acting under the Covenant. Great emergencies in the history of the United States, such as that in 1861, underwrite the Vandenberg viewpoint rather than that of the Lodge reservations.

longed reflection and the contributions of the smaller nations.³ Few constitutional conventions have been so methodically organized or have been able to carry on their work so systematically as this. Large as it was, the San Francisco Conference never created the impression of unwieldiness. It was organized into four commissions, each with a definite task to complete. Each of the fifty delegations held a seat on each commission; the commissions' meetings were public; but their real work was done in committees whose sessions were held in private and where no taboos affected the freedom of debate. At the outset the four sponsoring powers displayed a refreshing liberalism by inviting the rest to submit their proposals; actually hundreds of amendments were proposed as a result and were distributed according to subject matter among the four commissions and their committees. Language questions appear to have been a major factor in prolonging the Conference. English and French were accepted as the two working languages; but Chinese, Russian, and Spanish enjoyed official parity. Speeches delivered in a tongue other than English or French had to be translated orally into one or both of these, and documents coming from committees had to be translated and printed in all five languages. The final draft of the Charter was prepared at first in English; but the French, Chinese, Russian, and Spanish texts, into which the English text had to be translated, were all given equal authority. This multiplicity of languages enjoying parity with one another left the door open to future complications over differences in meaning.

The Conference reflected the profound changes wrought by the war in the balance of power. The center of gravity was no longer in Europe. The three big powers that had really won the war—the United States, the British Commonwealth, the Soviet Union—were either outside of Europe or on its edge. Besides France, there were only eight small and impoverished European nations repre-

³ Dumbarton Oaks was really two conferences, one following the other immediately. The first one was between the United States, the United Kingdom, and the Soviet Union. In the second conference China took the place of the Soviet Union, and the Proposals previously concurred in by the Big Three were submitted for the consideration of the Chinese. The duplication was necessary to keep up the illusion that Russia was not an ally of the other three in the war against Japan.

France was invited to become a sponsoring power at the San Francisco Conference but showed her displeasure at being excluded from the Crimea Conference in February by declining the invitation. Nevertheless, the French delegation under the lead of the dynamic foreign minister, Georges Bidault, showed up on the opening day of the Conference and forthwith secured a permanent seat on the Security Council.



sented at San Francisco. Numerically the twenty Latin-American republics represented the largest bloc of power and were economic beneficiaries of the war, none of them had contributed anything substantial to the winning of the war, however. Noting these unfair advantages in favor of Latin America, Russia had demanded and obtained separate votes at the Conference for two of the component members of the Soviet Union—Bielorussia and the Ukraine. The Conference had nothing to do with postwar issues; its confinement to the functions of a constitutional convention was deliberate in view of the clamor raised twenty-five years before against the League for being “contaminated” by the Versailles Treaty. So the fiction was carefully promoted to the effect that the United Nations were not to have the responsibility of making the peace. They were to preserve the peace after it had been made. To make this questionable distinction seem the more real, the Big Three at the meeting in the Crimea had created a conference of foreign ministers to meet periodically and by rotation in their respective capitals. Without doubting the need for separate and informal meetings of this kind, one should keep in mind that the same powers who make the peace also control the United Nations—if they cannot make a successful peace, the United Nations cannot preserve it.⁴

An organization chart of the United Nations shows three co-equal organs: the International Court of Justice, resting on a new Statute but nevertheless closely resembling the old World Court created in 1920, the General Assembly; and the Security Council. But the equality between them ends there. The Security Council is the fountainhead of the Organization. The powers and duties vested in it elevate it to the status of the central organ, if not the executive head, of the United Nations. The member states have obligated themselves to carry out its decisions. Of the General Assembly little need be said. There all members, large and small, meet on a common level and debate international issues as if in a forum. The body seems essentially the same as the old League Assembly, but its powers are definitely more limited. While the

⁴ The Potsdam Conference of July 1945—Russia, the United Kingdom, the United States—regularized the Council of Foreign Ministers by publishing a formal agreement with respect to it. It was to consist of the foreign ministers of the five powers, China and France being added. Its immediate task was to draw up peace treaties with Italy, Rumania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Finland, and to propose settlements of territorial questions. The fact that the said treaties were to be submitted to the United Nations would suggest that the artificial segregation of the latter from the peace conferences was already being dropped. *The Department of State Bulletin*, XIII (No. 319 [August 5, 1945]), 153-54.

small countries who dominate it can pass resolutions of complaint or warning on any issue they please, they are expressly restrained by the Charter from interfering with the Security Council. Since the great powers control the latter body, this provision is merely a formal recognition on paper of actualities in world politics. Nevertheless, the General Assembly holds possibilities that are not to be wholly ignored: even a mere debating society, when properly directed, may exert its influence over the strong

The Security Council has eleven members: the five great powers who occupy the permanent seats, and six other states chosen by the General Assembly for the non-permanent seats. In an effort to avoid a notorious evil that developed in the old League Council, provision is made by the Charter for methodically changing the non-permanent membership. At the first election three seats are to be filled for only one year; the other three members are to complete the full two years, the ordinary term stipulated for the temporary seats. Moreover, there is no privilege of immediate re-election, a safeguard against a small power becoming a mere puppet and occupying a seat because of the influence exerted by a great power. Finally, a clause stipulating that "due regard" is to be paid in the first instance to the contribution which members actually make to the maintenance of international peace and security opens the door of opportunity to the middle powers, such as Canada, Australia, and Brazil.⁵

The entire text of the Charter shows an awareness of the mistakes and weaknesses of the old League. The primacy of position granted to the Security Council is the most striking lesson. On paper the Council comes close to being an international government. Any member of the Organization may appeal to it or remonstrate with it; but, once the Council has decided on a line of action, the members constitutionally have no recourse but to fulfill its wishes. Like the Covenant, the Charter encourages individual states to settle disputes between themselves, but the Security Council may interpose at any time. All the members have obligated themselves to conclude contracts with the Council, making available to it on its call armed forces, assistance, and facilities, including rights of passage. These agreements "shall govern the numbers and types of forces, their degree of readiness and general location, and the

⁵ A glance at the results of the first elections held by the General Assembly at its meeting in London in January 1946 shows that these provisions were faithfully carried out. Egypt, Mexico, and the Netherlands were chosen for one-year terms, Australia, Brazil, and Poland for two-year terms.

nature of the facilities and assistance to be provided." Taking a leaf from the book of the Second World War, the United Nations have set up a Military Staff Committee to advise and assist the Council. This committee "shall consist of the Chiefs of Staff of the permanent members of the Security Council . . . The Military Staff Committee shall be responsible under the Security Council for the strategic direction of any armed forces placed at the disposal of the Security Council." Here, obviously, is an effort to broaden the system of an integrated strategy worked out under the leadership of the Combined Chiefs during the war. Nevertheless, the Charter sidesteps the question of who shall command in such cases, saying merely that such questions "shall be worked out subsequently." The door remains wide open for the several great powers to ignore their corporate capacity, emphasized by the Charter, and to put the stress on separate national policies, where it always has been, with responsibility and freedom of action vested in the separate national commands rather than in the Military Staff Committee.

Again with one eye on past mistakes, the makers of the Charter refrained from efforts to define aggression, or from prescribing the conditions under which the Security Council is to act, or from outlining the methods it must pursue.⁶ The elaborate enumeration of sanctions to be found in the Covenant is missing from the Charter, which speaks merely of "enforcement actions" to be undertaken by the Council. Thus the Charter is a more flexible instrument than the Covenant. Furthermore, the Security Council is guaranteed a continuous existence: each of its members must maintain a representative at all times at the seat of the Organization. Regional arrangements, such as the inter-American system, are not only expressly permitted, they are encouraged, and the Security Council is free to make use of them. But if it comes to a question of enforcement action, regional agencies are restrained without prior authorization from the Security Council. The implication becomes clear that the five great powers are, in the last analysis, to govern the world by mutual consent; regional systems are not to develop into exclusive areas of influence.⁷ Thus the Charter holds to the theory

⁶ The Act of Chapultepec, which emerged from the Inter-American Conference of Foreign Ministers at Mexico City in February 1945, does define aggression, however. See above, p. 248. Considering the varied forms which history can put under this general heading, it would seem that the limitations imposed by a fixed definition would surely defeat their own end. An attempt was made at San Francisco to insert a definition of aggression in the Charter, but fortunately it failed.

⁷ The text of the Act of Chapultepec reads as though the punishment of an aggressor in the Americas were exclusively an affair of the American nations. At

of "one world," and rejects the notion that issues of peace or war are capable anywhere of being localized.

On paper the United Nations have gone the whole distance toward collective security. Whether they have done so in fact is quite another thing. The Security Council is a wholly untested body. It assumes a certain corporateness and harmony of purpose which are not convincing in the face of existing international rivalries. In other words, the nations have again hitched their wagon to a star. In the Security Council they have the makings of a world government, with a potentially strong physical force at its back. But the job of operating this world government is entrusted to five great powers, each with a long and strongly entrenched tradition of nationalism behind it. To put the situation more bluntly still under the aegis of the great powers the United Nations operated smoothly and efficiently during the war. The Charter reflects the genuine wartime unity of 1942-45. But in the light of the pronounced tendencies of the great powers to revert to their customary rivalries and to build up new blocs of powers, the Charter leaves the world essentially where it found it—a world wherein nationalism is still the most powerful drive in directing (or misdirecting) its affairs. Whether one step forward is here to be followed by two to the rear time alone can determine.

This brings us to the question of voting on the Security Council. It is the sum of the whole matter, for in it any one of the Big Five has the power to make a laughing stock of the United Nations. The issue was so delicate that the Dumbarton Oaks Proposals post-

the time of this conference Argentina was feared and distrusted by her neighbors and the Act was aimed at her. But the United Nations Charter takes precedence over the Act of Chapultepec, and therefore the undertaking of an "enforcement action" against an American aggressor must await approval from the Security Council. To cite a possible instance where complications would almost certainly arise: concerted action against Argentina by the United States and the other American nations would require prior consent by Great Britain, since the latter is a permanent member of the Security Council. Again it may be asked, however, what constitutes an "enforcement action"? In the Americas the characteristic method is to withhold or withdraw diplomatic recognition. On the other hand, the Act of Chapultepec and proposals made subsequently to implement it hint at stronger measures. See pp 248-50.

The inter-American system is mentioned simply because it is the best-known regional system and the only one which enjoys a measure of formal international recognition. Apparently the makers of the Charter had it principally in mind; and, since the United States was one of the chief parties to the Charter, it is only reasonable to assume that the limitations imposed by it on regional agencies received exhaustive scrutiny. The question is an illustration of the fact that much of the inside activity connected with the San Francisco Conference was closely guarded.

poned decision; and it was only at Yalta in the Crimea that Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin arrived at an understanding. The Yalta formula was devised by Roosevelt and later written into the Charter. On all policy questions, decisions of the Security Council "shall be made by an affirmative vote of seven members including the concurring votes of the permanent members." In other words, the Charter serves solemn notice that it is no stronger than the five great powers are willing to have it, that the bedrock of the United Nations is the permanent alliance among them, and that the alliance itself can be nullified by a simple refusal of any one of the great powers to modify its actions to conform to the ideas of the others. The interplay of national ambitions and of differing concepts of national safety remains as virile and perilous as it has always been in the affairs of nations.

Nowhere is this danger more apparent than in the rough bumps felt by the English-speaking powers in their encounters with the Soviet Union. Conscious of the tremendous strategic advantages she had won from the war, Russia held to an absolute view of this veto power: she maintained her right to veto even the discussion by the Council of a question which displeased her. From the Soviet viewpoint the Security Council was merely to echo the voice of the Big Five, who were to reach their own decisions behind the closed doors of special conferences. Obviously there existed a wide gulf between the Russians and the British-Americans, and no bridge was built between them prior to the meeting at San Francisco. As matters stood at the time that conference opened, the United Nations Organization was foredoomed to a career of futility. From this it was rescued partly by the determined protests of the smaller powers led by Dr. Herbert Evatt, the forceful foreign minister of Australia. Evatt had the backing of both Britain and the United States, however. On their right to veto decisions to enforce the peace the two English-speaking powers were just as firm as the Russians, but plainly they felt the veto should be used only as a last resort. They did not favor the Security Council conducting its meetings in an atmosphere of suppression. The deadlock continued until near the close of the San Francisco Conference, when Harry Hopkins, on a special mission to Moscow from the American government, won Stalin's personal consent to a compromise that assured freedom of hearing and discussion before the Council. No individual member, it was announced, could suppress discussion or deny the right of a party with a grievance to state its case. Nevertheless, if it became clear that the controversy was bringing no results other than an aggravation of the general

international situation, the Council might at any time terminate the discussion.⁸ Finally, it remains true that the Council is vested with authority to deal only with small wars. The Charter is no panacea for a festering hostility between the great powers. It is no cure for the danger of the world breaking into two rival blocs dominated by the Soviet Union and the Anglo-American powers, respectively, unless the powers themselves arrest their tendencies in that direction. In other words, the quest for durable peace remains as elusive as ever, under the new postwar constellation the final answers must be given by the Big Three, and at best the Security Council remains an uncertain, if imposing, front.

If the future of the Security Council seems to hang principally on the secrets of the Kremlin, that of the new trusteeship system is left in doubt by the attitude of the United States. It was agreed by the Big Three at Yalta that they would decide among themselves on the division of territory conquered from the enemy. The chief issue was over the Pacific islands, wrested by American forces from the Japanese. Would they be annexed outright to the United States, or would they be converted into trust territories to be administered under the new Trusteeship Council set up by the Charter?

⁸ The text of this important announcement is printed in *The Department of State Bulletin*, XII (No. 311 [June 10, 1945]), 1047 f. The Security Council started its very first session in January 1946 with a dispute between the Soviet Union and Iran which illustrates this arrangement in operation. The Iranian delegate to the General Assembly complained to the Council against Russian action in aiding and abetting a rebellion in Azerbaijan and the Caspian provinces of Iran with the apparent intention of detaching this portion of the country adjacent to Russia and setting up a puppet regime. The Soviet member of the Council tried, but failed, to keep the Iranian case from being presented. The matter had not gone far, however, when the Council announced that it was turning the dispute back to the two parties for direct settlement. The Russians thus got their way with the other great powers, since they had insisted from the outset that the question was strictly an affair between themselves and the Iranians. The Council, however, insisted on its right to supervise the negotiations and to pass judgment on the final agreement reached. Whether this reservation was merely a face-saving device or something stronger remains to be seen. *New York Times*, January 31, 1946.

Part of the Russian insistence upon a free exercise of the veto is said to arise from the fear lest the small states bordering on the Soviet Union will seek an opportunity to extend their territory at Russian expense. However justified the Russians may be in fearing for the integrity of their own soil, nevertheless their attitude continues in sharp contrast to that of the British. At the same session of the Council Britain invited full investigation into her own activities in connection with the preservation of order in Indonesia and Greece. The British foreign minister, Ernest Bevin, bluntly demanded a vote of confidence from the Council, and his position was endorsed by statements from the Greek government and the Indonesian insurgents. The incident, though giving rise to fiery exchanges between the Russians and the British, helped to clear the atmosphere in favor of Britain. The Russian delegate created the impression that he was striving for effect

In either event this question could not be separated from the problem of keeping the peace in the Pacific. The United States was now mistress of that ocean from shore to shore. She held not only the former Japanese mandates—the Marshalls, the Carolines, the Marianas—but she also occupied the Bonins, the Ryukus, and the Japanese homeland itself. How was this absolute domination of the world's largest ocean—the first time in history that such a triumph had occurred—to be reconciled with the principles of the Charter? Would not outright annexation be viewed in Moscow with as much distrust as Russian domination of the borderlands was considered in Washington? To save the islands, or a portion of them, from falling under international control or from being demilitarized, the United States secured an important qualification of the trusteeship provisions. Strategic areas were recognized as separate from other trust territory, and were to be designated in the trusteeship agreements. The problem of designating such areas, however, of determining whether all or only a part of the conquered Pacific islands were to be so set apart, and of deciding whether they were to be subject exclusively to American jurisdiction or to some type of international supervision under the United Nations Organization, proved to be extremely complicated. And at the first meeting of the Security Council in January 1946, these questions were still being discussed in private conversations by the Big Three. Nor was there as yet a publicly announced policy on the part of the United States government as to its intentions toward the islands. Persistent inquiries brought forth only ambiguous replies from the President. All that he would say was that the "national defense interests" of the United States would not be sacrificed. Differences of opinion within the government itself were evident, and ranged from demands for outright annexation of all the captured islands to a desire to confine the strategic area to a center line extending from Hawaii to the Asiatic mainland, the islands outside of this security belt to be turned over to the trusteeship council. There can be no doubt that the ultimate arrangements respecting these islands constitute one of the major problems of the peace.⁹

⁹ *New York Times*, January 15, 1946. For a good over-all sketch of the problems see *Foreign Policy Association Reports*, XXI, No. 13 (September 15, 1945), "Future of the Japanese Mandated Islands," by William C. Johnstone. See also *The Department of State Bulletin*, XIII (No. 340, December 30, 1945), 1037-44, "Trusteeship and Non-Self-Governing Territories in the Charter of the United Nations," by Ralph J. Bunche.

The disposition of the Pacific islands touches intimately the question of the occupation of Japan itself, and is of great importance in the management of Russian-American relations. A secret agreement between Roosevelt and Stalin at

American hesitancy with respect to the Pacific islands was compounded of several elements: a natural reluctance to give up the hard-won fruits of victory, a deep concern for the security of the Western Pacific, the key to which was locked up in the islands, and a desire to advance the idea of trusteeship for backward peoples. It was Franklin D. Roosevelt who raised this latter question at Yalta—apparently with the thought chiefly in mind of proposing an escape in the postwar world from the evils of colonialism and domination by the white race over the colored peoples of Africa, Asia, and the south-west Pacific. Moreover, it appears to have been mainly American influence that introduced into the Charter its elaborate provisions relating to trusteeship. No wonder that in 1946 American foreign policy seemed to be tortured on the two horns of a dilemma. If it insisted on keeping the Pacific islands exclusively for the United States, it would be hoist with its own petard. The United States would have a major colonial empire, substantially of the same nature as those of the British, Dutch, and French. If, on the other hand, it turned over a sizeable number of the islands to the Trusteeship Council, it faced the risk of exposing its flank to some future aggression.¹⁰

The trust provisions of the Charter do, in fact, provide an opportunity for an orderly transition from nineteenth-century colonialism to the eventual independence of backward peoples. Trust territories are defined in three categories: former mandates, territories which may be detached from enemy states as a result of World War II, and "territories voluntarily placed under the system by states responsible for their administration." Plainly this last classification is an invitation to existing colonial empires—France in Indo-China, the Netherlands in Indonesia, for instance—to convert their dependencies into trusteeships. Trust territories are to be administered by a trustee nation in accordance with a special agreement to be concluded between it and the Trusteeship Council of the Organi-

Yalta gave the Kurile Islands to the USSR, thus materially strengthening the latter country's position as a Pacific power. Possession of the Kuriles enabled the Japanese to establish footholds in the Aleutian Islands in 1942. Obviously the situation in the Pacific holds explosive possibilities; nor can the United States long rely on sheer naval supremacy for guaranteeing its security in that area.

¹⁰ The distinction between strategic and nonstrategic areas is not so clear-cut in fact as it looks on paper. The island of Okinawa, for example, is indubitably a strategic area; but it is also inhabited by a large native population. The same holds true of many of the former Japanese mandates, where a Japanese population of over a hundred thousand lives side by side with the aborigines. On the other hand, some of the mandated islands are mere atolls, uninhabitable, but invaluable as anchorages and for other military purposes.

zation, or they may be administered directly by the Organization itself. The Trusteeship Council is to consist of (a) the Big Five, (b) other members who are administering trust territories, and (c) an equal number of states members of the Organization who are not acting in a trust capacity. Each member of the Council shall have one vote, and the Council's decisions "shall be made by a majority of the members present and voting." This gives to the Trusteeship Council a distinction more truly international and collective than can be claimed for the Security Council. Nevertheless, its future rests with the existing colonial powers, their various calculations with reference to their defense requirements, and their fundamental attitude toward the treatment of backward peoples.¹¹ Of the several parties involved, only Great Britain adopted a clear, forward-looking stand. At the first meeting of the General Assembly in 1946 the British government made an unconditional offer to turn over its mandates to the Organization, a first step along the road to a higher status for important dependencies.¹²

Meantime Britain and the United States were making use of a quiet part of the colonial world in order to give an object lesson in the advancement of dependent peoples. They created in March 1942 an Anglo-American Caribbean Commission for the consideration and improvement of common economic and social conditions in their respective West Indian colonies. The Commission consists of six members, three from each country, and is authorized to deal with matters pertaining to labor, agriculture, housing, health, education, social welfare, finance, and economics. Almost at once the field of interest was enlarged to include most of the islands of the Caribbean.

¹¹ The trust provisions of the Charter are contained in chapters XI-XIII. It is not to be overlooked that Russia is designated for membership in the Trusteeship Council, a circumstance which gives her an opening wedge for interference in trust territories in the Pacific and possibly also in the determination of strategic areas. Furthermore, the Russians have already shown a heavy hand by demanding a trusteeship in North Africa, thus arousing Anglo-American suspicions that they wish to interfere in the Mediterranean and Near East.

¹² The principal British mandates are Tanganyika, the Cameroons, and Togoland in Africa, areas of considerable importance. The Union of South Africa and Australia showed no such liberalism, however, but indicated rather that they would insist on keeping the status quo with respect to their mandates (now colonies in all but name). The French government indicated that it intended to demand the return of Indo-China, and New Caledonia, but inasmuch as the former was liberated by Anglo-American forces and the latter was under American occupation, the final answer rested obviously with Britain and the United States. The Dutch government expressed its willingness to proceed on the basis of a grant of dominion status to the Indonesians, which, if established, would possess only a theoretical difference from an advanced type of trusteeship. The United States, as we have seen, is fated to enlarge its colonial empire in spite of itself.

The Netherlands, Cuba, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and also Canada joined in the work of the commission. In March 1944 the Commission convened in Barbados a West Indian Conference, consisting of two delegates from each of eight British colonies and two from Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, respectively. It was "the first international conference ever held by representatives of dependent peoples", three-fourths of the delegates were permanent residents of the West Indies, and the races were about evenly divided. The practical nature of the work of the conference is attested by its concentration on problems of how to increase the food production and improve the diet of people in a part of the world notorious for its chronic state of poverty, disease, and general wretchedness. "The possibility has not been lost sight of," writes the American co-chairman, "that the Anglo-American Caribbean Commission may point the way to the creation of other regional commissions for the benefits of dependent peoples in other parts of the world."¹⁸

What the Anglo-American Caribbean Commission is attempting to do for one region, a number of other organizations are struggling to do for the world as a whole. Chief among these is the Food and Agriculture Organization, which grew out of a United Nations food conference held at Hot Springs, Virginia, in 1943. "The first of the peace conferences for World War II," the Hot Springs Conference has with justice been called. For though this meeting had nothing to do with the making of peace in the conventional sense, it was summoned to explore one of the underlying conditions—hunger—that make for international upheavals. Experts attending the Conference agreed that agricultural science was capable of meeting the world's food and nutrition problems but that the question of how to accomplish results called for a long-range program carried on by a permanent organization. FAO had its first conference in Quebec in November 1945; it maintains central head-

¹⁸ *The Department of State Bulletin*, XI (No 276, October 8, 1944), 377-79. "The Anglo-American Caribbean Commission," by Charles W. Taussig. Announcement was made by the two governments in January 1946 of another West Indian conference scheduled to meet in the Virgin Islands in February, the French and Dutch governments to join in. As an important trading power in the West Indies, Canada has an interest in the work of the Commission. It should also be noted that President Roosevelt appended to the original announcement setting up the Commission a statement to the effect that the United States did not seek sovereignty over the islands and bases where it had an interest.

In the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry on Palestine, established in 1946, lies further evidence of progress in merging the interests of the two countries with respect to the management of dependent areas. Politically, of course, Palestine is in an explosive part of the world, while the Caribbean is not.

quarters in Washington, D C , and it is expected to tackle the food problem from a marketing as well as a production angle. But its success is wrapped up with a multitude of other complicated factors, domestic and global. The Food and Agriculture Organization is not designed, like UNRRA, to be an international charity organization, it is supposed to find a way by which food surpluses can be distributed in an orderly manner to parts of the world where they are most needed. So imaginative a program—long acknowledged to be sound in principle—depends upon the general readiness of the nations to forego their sovereign prerogative to order their own economy by means of tariff laws and other instruments of nationalism. Progress in solving the world's perennial food problem is contingent upon a disposition to begin the scrapping of national systems of economy and protectionist ideologies and to commence laying the groundwork for a common world economy in which prosperity and well-being are regarded as mutual. If the political, social, and economic revolution through which the world seems to be passing in the twentieth century is to muddle through eventually to success, tariff barriers and other artificial restraints on the flow of trade must come down. But nationalism, as we have already noted in this chapter, is a very powerful and resurgent force in the world; and FAO, like UN itself, is an absolutely untried institution.¹⁴

¹⁴ See *The Department of State Bulletin*, XII (No. 295, February 18, 1945), 225-30, "The Purpose and Structure of the Proposed Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations," by Howard R. Tolley and Leroy D. Stinebower. See also *ibid.*, XIII (No. 332, November 4, 1945), 724-26; and *Foreign Policy Association Reports* XXI (No. 18, December 1, 1945), "Pillars of the United Nations—International Economic and Social Agencies," by Blair Bolles.

The United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Association (UNRRA) is essentially a relief agency and is intended to be temporary. It was created in 1943 to take over from the Allied armies the job of civilian relief in countries that should be freed from the foe. It is devoted to meeting human wants in food, clothing, and medical assistance, and is concerned only incidentally with the rehabilitation of transport systems, industry, and public utilities. In 1944 there were forty-four nations constituting the membership of UNRRA, each one obligated to contribute a minimum of one per cent of its national income annually to the organization. Total appropriations by the United States by the end of that year amounted to \$1,350,000,000.

Somewhat ironically, Italy, an ex-enemy, has been one of the largest beneficiaries of aid from UNRRA, and was actually the first recipient. The organization also functions in India; and the original idea that its work be limited to friendly countries that had been liberated has never been operative. See *The Department of State Bulletin*, XI (No. 279, October 29, 1944), 501 ff. "The Second Session of the Council of UNRRA," by Edward G. Miller.

Still another permanent international organization dedicated to social betterment on a world scale is the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), assigned the task of preparing a program for evening up differentials in educational opportunity. UNESCO had its first full meeting and

Equally experimental, though no less essential, were the plans developed in 1944 for coping with the financial problems certain to confront the United Nations after the war. How was international trade to be restored and conducted on an orderly basis, such as had existed in the years before 1914 when the international gold standard had provided a medium for changing the currencies of different countries? A simple return to the gold standard was too Utopian to receive serious thought. On the other hand, if no attempt was made to stabilize the various national currencies on which must rest all international commercial transactions, there was not the faintest possibility of restoring equilibrium after the war. Economic chaos had been one of the evil fruits of the previous conflict, the nations had not tried to provide the minimum essentials for an orderly exchange of goods. The first requirement of economic peace was an institution that would guarantee to importers that they could pay for the goods they proposed to buy. Violent fluctuations in the exchange rates between different currencies made international trade impossible. In the second place, the war had destroyed the monetary systems of practically all European countries, and though sterling, which symbolized the British monetary system, still enjoyed the confidence of traders abroad, nevertheless it was now at a tremendous disadvantage in relation to the United States dollar. The basic economic and financial disadvantages faced by Great Britain were even more ominous when the plight of the Continental nations was viewed. Great Britain and the Continental states alike based their economy on their foreign trade, the standard of living was conditioned by an ability to export goods and services. For its part, the United States had been brought by the war to depend on its foreign trade to an extent not equalled, in all probability, since the time of Washington. Out of sheer self-protection, the United States was obligated to prevent chaos in the currency systems of other countries. But it was even more obliged to help in rebuilding the shattered economies of nations devastated or even seriously injured by the war. If any planning for the postwar world was to be taken seriously, that which undertook to head off economic destruction stood first in importance.

Both the United States and the British treasuries anticipated this need as early as 1942, and a continued exchange of views between them, the drafting of plans for international monetary stabilization, and the careful publicizing of the plans eventuated in a remarkable

adopted its constitution in London in November 1945. *The Department of State Bulletin*, XIII, No. 319 (August 5, 1945), 165-75, contains the draft constitution

international conference in July 1944. This was the United Nations Monetary and Financial Conference at Bretton Woods, New Hampshire. Forty-four nations participated, the Conference lasted for three weeks and arrived at definite agreements, but credit for its amazing success must go to the careful preparations which had filled the previous two years in the deliberations of Washington and London. To these had been added the views of financial experts from thirty other countries, with the net result that, more than a month before Bretton Woods opened its sessions, there was abundant basis for completing a finished plan.

The Bretton Woods Agreements provide for two far-reaching international financial institutions, the International Monetary Fund and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.¹⁵ The purpose of the Fund is to stabilize exchange rates, member states who are short in the supply of the currencies of other countries with whom they trade may buy the requisite amounts of the needed currencies from the Fund. Thus, for example, the United States dollar is a scarce currency in Europe. The reason for this is, of course, the unprecedented imbalance of trade—the extraordinary European consumption of United States goods during the war in contrast to the virtual cessation of European exports. European countries must have a means of securing dollars in order to finance the purchase of foodstuffs and basic commodities they need for their survival. One effect of the position of overwhelming economic dominance obtained by the United States from the war is to make the American dollar the standard unit of value throughout the world. It fills the place once held by sterling. In a free international gold market characteristic of the nineteenth century sterling was readily obtainable through the sale of gold, and trade balances between nations were usually settled in terms of the English pound. The Fund is designed to perform essentially the function once fulfilled by gold: members may under certain conditions buy from the Fund the American dollars they need for settling their accounts. The Fund springs from payments made by the various member states on a quota basis, partly in gold and partly in their own currencies. The par value of each national currency is set by a Board of Governors, acting through Executive Directors, who manage the Fund for the purpose of keeping each national currency at or near par. Being the country contributing the largest quota to the Fund, the United States becomes the seat of the Board of Governors.

¹⁵ The text of the Bretton Woods Agreements is printed in *International Conciliation*, September 1945, No. 413.

The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development is intended to assist in getting the flow of international investment capital started. The problem is a very urgent one if countries ravaged by war are to have a chance to rebuild their shattered industries and work their way out of poverty. Thus while the Fund aims to open up the ordinary channels of trade between nations, the Bank is an instrument for the reconstruction of the basic economies of the victims of war. The two institutions are complementary and should operate together toward restoring a normal balance in the world's economic life. Without substantial progress in this direction there can be only despair in Europe, with at best a short-lived boom in the United States followed by an economic cyclone. It remains yet to be demonstrated whether Americans have at last awakened to the solemn fact that they have built up an industrial machine so huge in its capacity that it cannot survive on the domestic market and therefore must have prosperous customers abroad. To put it more bluntly still, the imbalance in the world's economy has now, in consequence of the war, become so grave that a New Deal on a vast world scale must be undertaken. The situation demands an adventure in international socialism, and since the United States is the principal, if not the exclusive economic victor of the war, it must share its assets with the war's victims if it is to safeguard its own economy. The Bretton Woods Agreements have paved the way in expert fashion. They are the finest evidence of thoughtful planning for the postwar world. The period of reconstruction has now begun, and with it comes the testing time of the new financial system.¹⁰

Substantial testimony that the Executive Branch of the American government was conscious of its responsibilities was forth-

¹⁰ As with the Fund, the capital of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development is to be paid in on a quota basis, partly in gold or United States dollars and partly in currencies of the members. The Bank also is to be managed by a Board of Governors whose voting power is evaluated by the amount of the quota of the respective member states. The total amount of the Fund is \$8,800,000,000, while the prescribed minimum capital of the Bank is \$9,100,000,000. Twenty per cent of the Bank's capital may be employed in making direct loans to borrowing nations, but the remaining 80 per cent is to constitute a reserve fund to be used for guaranteeing loans made by private sources. This feature appears to have been introduced to satisfy the demands of the New York banks, who saw in the new World Bank a potential monopoly excluding them from the field of international lending.

The Bretton Woods Agreements became operative on December 31, 1945, by which time governments whose quotas represented 65 per cent of the total amounts had ratified. The United States Congress and the British Parliament approved the agreements just before the deadline date. The Soviet Union had been an active participant at Bretton Woods and had signified its approval. Nevertheless, keeping its reasons to itself, the U.S.S.R. failed to ratify within the allotted time.

coming early in December 1945 with the completion of a vital financial agreement with the United Kingdom. Subject to Congressional approval, the American government agreed to extend to the United Kingdom a line of credit of \$3,750,000,000, to be drawn upon at any time between the effective date of the agreement and December 31, 1951. The agreement declared:

The purpose of the line of credit is to facilitate purchases by the United Kingdom of goods and services in the United States, to assist the United Kingdom to meet transitional postwar deficits in its current balance of payments, to help the United Kingdom to maintain adequate reserves of gold and dollars, and to assist the Government of the United Kingdom to assume the obligations of multilateral trade, as defined in this and other agreements.

Thus the Anglo-American Financial Agreement is an important corollary to the Bretton Woods Agreements. It promotes an orderly trade between the two countries, enabling Britain to continue to buy in the American market while she in the meantime puts her own industrial economy in order and rebuilds her export trade. As the two largest world-trading nations, Britain and the United States hold in their hands the keys to the economic reconstruction of the world. The Bretton Woods Agreements are themselves chiefly the product of the joint labors of these two countries. The whole effort is bent toward breaking up the exclusive trading blocs and averting a repetition of the economic warfare that set the stage for the armed conflict of 1939. It is no exaggeration to say that ratification of the Anglo-American Financial Agreement is the test of American good faith in carrying out the larger program of world economic recovery. Free and healthy commercial relations between the two largest traders is the first requirement of world peace. The agreement averts the danger of commercial warfare between the United States and the group of nations forming the sterling bloc. Not only does it make the Bretton Woods Agreements workable, but it is a measure of the highest political importance as well. It is a real test of the vitality of the United Nations idea. Whether the world shall progress in the direction of economic and political unity or shall divide into rival and eventually hostile blocs, with war the probable outcome, may well be determined by the first important steps taken. Coincidental with the announcement of the Financial Agreement, the British and American governments published a detailed joint statement containing proposals for the expansion of world trade and employment, and they also proclaimed their intention to summon a world

economic conference in 1946. From the enactment of the Lend-Lease Act in 1941 to the Financial Agreement of December 1945, the Anglo-American record has been one of remarkable economic as well as political and military teamwork. Their collaboration went far beyond the requirements for winning the war. In the close joint planning between them for world financial and economic reconstruction lies the best proof of their mutual desire to make a reality out of collective security.¹⁷

It thus becomes apparent that, so far as governmental foresight and planning count for anything, the phrase "winning the peace," so often heard during the war, was intended as no empty slogan. Every effort was made during the war years, especially under British-American leadership, to extract a real victory from the military

¹⁷ Texts of the Financial Agreement and of the Proposals on World Trade and Employment in *The Department of State Bulletin*, XIII (No. 337, December 9, 1945), 907-29. Though continuing the essential principles of the Lend-Lease Act and the wartime Mutual Aid Agreement which, we remember, emphasized benefits rather than money, the Financial Agreement contained provisions for repayment by Britain of principal and interest at two per cent over a period of fifty years. Two per cent is slightly in excess of what it costs the American government to borrow money, hence the agreement resembles a commercial transaction made for a profit. The wisdom of this feature is open to question, but in terms of practical politics it was probably necessary. It is supremely important that the real object of the agreement be kept in mind, however, as a vital step in implementing peace. Emotional reactions, such as those arising from the mishandling of the World War Debt Settlements of the 1920's, should be kept at a minimum if planning for permanent peace is to come to anything. The Financial Agreement recognizes this danger in a clause which provides for waiver of interest payments in case the income of the United Kingdom from foreign trade sources is not equal to a stated amount.

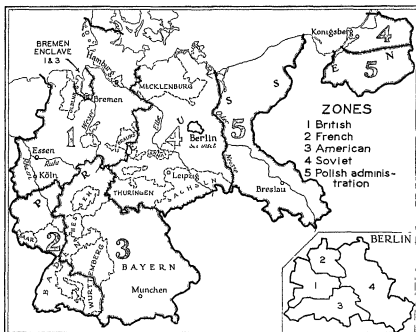
The benefits of the Financial Agreement are twofold: the substantial contribution it makes to world recovery in general, and the assurances of the United Kingdom that it will reduce exchange controls which restrict imports from the United States into the British Isles and other countries within the sterling bloc.

Coincidentally with the Financial Agreement, the two governments announced they had settled once and for all the accounts of lend-lease and reverse lend-lease between them. The net sum due from the United Kingdom on this account was declared to be \$650,000,000, representing largely the value of military installations and other property of the United States left in the United Kingdom.

There is not space in this book to give an adequate description of the vast amount of economic collaboration and planning undertaken by the two governments on the matter of postwar international trade and finance. In addition to Bretton Woods and the other agencies described in the above pages, forethought was taken as to providing a free world market for petroleum. An Anglo-American petroleum agreement, negotiated in August 1944, promised a continuous and orderly supply of petroleum to the nationals of all peaceable countries at fair prices and on a nondiscriminatory basis. (*The Department of State Bulletin*, XI [No. 268, August 13, 1944], 153-56.)

The Anglo-American Financial Agreement was approved by joint resolution of Congress, July 15, 1946.

defeat of the Axis. Economic and social problems, it was realized, would arise from the wreckage of the war on a scale never previously known to history. A six-year cyclone had swept over Europe, practically blowing civilization to bits. The destruction was not merely physical and material, it had undermined the moral and spiritual foundations of civilized life. A return to old methods, based on



conceptions of nationalism and separate action, would lead only to further disasters. A new and imaginative approach, based on common action and a common desire to survive, must be begun. A workable pattern for the future was laid out during the war years. Whether it would be translated from paper to practice was something for the nations to ponder in 1946.¹⁸

¹⁸ Congressional approval was reached after six months, and then only by slim majorities. This phenomenon stands out in sharp contrast to the speedy vote and virtual unanimity that had previously been exhibited in favor of the San Francisco Charter and the Bretton Woods Agreements. But to oppose the Financial Agreement while professing to support the United Nations is to be utterly inconsistent. It takes just such measures if the United Nations is to have a chance.

Mention should also be made of the Economic and Social Council set up under

Turning aside from this vast network of international organization, the product largely of the British-American mind, let us now bind together the main strands of events unfolding during the second half of 1945. It was at their conference in Potsdam, July 17 to 25, that the three heads of states completed the plans begun at Yalta for the treatment of Germany.¹⁹ The quadripartite system of occupation set up by the supreme Allied commanders the preceding month was confirmed and directions were set forth in detail for the future government of Germany. It was a unique undertaking in international administration, for never before had four allied powers attempted to govern co-operatively a country which they had not only defeated but bereft of all sovereignty. Each power exercised the final authority in its respective occupation zone; nevertheless, the Potsdam directives stressed the importance of developing a common program, and the Allied Control Council, consisting of the four commanders, was ordered to be continued.²⁰ The postwar solidarity of the four victor powers would indeed be put to the test: could they divide Germany into four separate zones and yet respect the essential unity of the country? Specifically, was a reasonable degree of collaboration among them possible, or was Germany fated to become eventually a battleground between the Soviet Union on the one hand and the Anglo-American powers on the other? The risk was very great, but it had to be taken. A fundamental change had come about as a result of the war: Germany was done for, France was striving to re-

the United Nations Charter. This body is composed of eighteen members elected by the General Assembly, and is intended as a general co-ordinating organization in world economic and social work. The Charter devotes two chapters to the Council but refrains from giving precise definitions to its functions. It seems to be expected to establish relations with FAO, the International Monetary Fund, and other specialized agencies, but just what the connection will be is for the future to determine.

¹⁹ President Roosevelt, we remember, passed away in April, half-way between the meeting in the Crimea and the Potsdam Conference. Truman had his first meeting with the Russian and British leaders at Potsdam. It was in the midst of this conference, moreover, that the Labor Party assumed power in Britain and Clement R. Attlee replaced Churchill. Notwithstanding these important changes, the Conference proceeded smoothly.

²⁰ Text of the Potsdam Agreement in *The Department of State Bulletin*, XIII (No. 319, August 5, 1945), 153-61. Final authority over Germany is not in the hands of the commanders who make up the Allied Control Council in Berlin but is retained by the four governments. Unanimous agreement is essential in the Control Council, as it is on the part of the governments. From every angle great-power unity holds the key to peace. Exercise of the veto on the Security Council of UN on some future German issue, for instance, would merely echo a breach already made in the inner councils. It must not be forgotten that Potsdam vests the control of Germany in the four great powers, and not in the United Nations.

gain her position, but obviously she was so weak that whatever she did was dependent upon receiving the prior consent of the other three. In other words, the peace of Europe was no longer in the keeping of Europe itself but was mortgaged to the policies of three nations which were non-European. Would the Big Three lay the foundations for an equitable European peace structure and, by so doing, demonstrate their ability to preserve peace among themselves, or would Germany in particular, and the continent in general be broken into exclusive spheres of influence, with the Anglo-American powers headed for a catastrophic collision with Russia? The experience in handling Germany might well determine the pattern for the whole continent.²¹

The main principle underlying the Potsdam plan for Germany is that that country shall be permanently incapacitated for menacing its neighbors. It is a compromise between proposals for a "hard" peace, sponsored by certain circles in the American government, and a "soft" peace. The German people are not to be destroyed or enslaved, on the contrary, they are to be given an opportunity to take their place in due course, "among the free and peaceful peoples of the world." Local self-government is to be promoted as rapidly as practicable, and the right of free public discussion and formation of democratic political parties encouraged. The economic provisions of the plan are fundamental. Germany's war potential must be eliminated. Therefore her heavy industry is to be restricted; the production of metals, chemicals, machinery, and other items directly necessary to a war economy shall be rigidly controlled. On the other hand, mining for export, agriculture, and small industry are to be stimulated. The reparations provisions of the agreement fall in with this purpose. Each power is entitled to remove machinery and other industrial equipment from its zone toward the rebuilding of its own devastated areas. France, Poland, and the Soviet Union are particularly involved in this part of the program. The Russians not only may strip their own occupied territory but may draw on the western parts

²¹ The recuperative powers of the French may well prove crucial in the problem of European peace. France is the one European nation possessing the standing of a great power. Despite the fact that she was ignored at Yalta, she quickly gained a permanent seat on the Security Council. Moreover, she was not a party to the Potsdam Agreement, yet the other three powers gave her an equal voice in the administration of Germany and a portion of the Rhineland as an occupation zone. These steps suggest that the recovery of France is a prime object of high policy on the part of the other three powers.

The French had a twenty-year treaty of alliance and mutual assistance with the Soviet Union, concluded in January 1945 before the meeting of the Big Three at Yalta. *The Department of State Bulletin*, XII (No. 289, January 7, 1945), 39-40.

of Germany on the basis of fixed percentages in order to recoup their losses²²

The retention by each country of its German prisoners of war for labor in rebuilding their shattered towns is not mentioned in the Potsdam Agreement, but nevertheless it constitutes an important part of reparations. No reference is made to the western boundaries of Germany; but virtually a free hand is given to Russia to define the eastern boundary for herself and Poland. Danzig and about half of East Prussia go to Poland, Königsberg and the rest of East Prussia to Russia. The punishment of war criminals had been resolved upon as long ago as October 1943, when the foreign ministers of the Big Three held their first joint meeting in Moscow. It was provided that German officers and men and members of the Nazi party responsible for the horrible atrocities they had committed were to be sent back to the scenes of their crimes for punishment. As for the ringleaders, criminals "whose crimes have no particular geographical localization," the Potsdam Agreement laid the basis for their joint trial by the four powers at Nuremberg. The punishment of war criminals is an issue of first importance because of the principle that it seeks to establish in international law—that the commission of an armed aggression, or even the plotting of such aggression, is a crime. Confirmation of this principle—unknown so far to the law of nations—is a step in the direction of a world governed by law.²³

The Potsdam Conference wound up its work with a statement on the desirability of concluding treaties of peace with Italy, Bulgaria, Finland, Hungary, and Rumania. Once recognized democratic

²² Most of German heavy industry was located inside the British and French zones; hence this stipulation. Division of these spoils, however, is reported to be a bone of contention among the occupying powers. See *Foreign Policy Reports*, XXI, (No. 16, November 1, 1945), "Allied Military Rule in Germany," by Winifred N. Hadsel.

At the same time Russia was striving to build up a mammoth industry located in the broad region of the Ural Mountains, so remote from the borders as to be unassailable and yet so centrally located as to be able to throw its weight with equal effect either east or west. Industrially the Soviet Union seems destined to possess all of the natural advantages hitherto enjoyed by American industry. An illuminating article by C. L. Sulzberger in the *New York Times*, March 26, 1945, describes this development.

²³ The legal principles underlying the trial of the major war criminals stem from the League of Nations Covenant and the Paris Peace Pact, wherein war was renounced as an instrument of national policy. It is but a step from this concept to the rule that violators can be punished. Conviction of the war criminals is a vital blow at the archaic rule of international law that the sovereign state is responsible to no one for its acts. Aggressive war will thus become a definable and punishable crime.

There is one grave contradiction in the Potsdam Agreement. The agreement

governments were established in those countries and treaties negotiated with them, declared the Big Three, they would be favored for membership in the United Nations. Here again the basic principle of great power solidarity was enunciated. Agreement with respect to Central Europe was scarcely less vital than it was concerning Germany. First discussions at a meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers in September 1945 revealed a deep chasm between Russia and the Western powers, but a second meeting in the following January unexpectedly turned into harmony, and a peace conference with Italy and these smaller countries was definitely promised for some time during the spring of 1946.

Meanwhile fresh tensions between Russia and the Western powers were felt in the regions of the Near, Middle, and Far East. An astounding Soviet demand for a trusteeship over Tripolitania, a thinly disguised conspiracy to detach the northern provinces of Iran and force oil concessions from that country, and the sudden exertion of strong pressure on Greece with the object of separating that country from its alliance with Great Britain and setting up a government that would look in Moscow's direction all pointed to a single end: a forward thrust that would outflank the lifeline of the Suez Canal. Backed by a formidable military and economic power such as Imperial Russia had never enjoyed, this new Communist Empire was launching out on adventures that, unless checked, would make a third world war inevitable. Possession of Suez by a great land power already the mistress of the heart of Europe would give a springboard for the control of all Asia and Africa. The vast world island of Eurasia-Africa, of empire over which the German Nazi State had dreamed, would become the heritage of Moscow.

In the Far East also the Soviet Union was using heavy ink to mark the imperial pattern drawn by the Czar fifty years before. An important treaty with the Nationalist Government of China in August 1945 revealed that Russia had decided to forsake the Chinese Communists and bid for a close alliance with Chiang Kai-shek. First fruits of this alliance ripened in Manchuria. Chinese Nationalist troops were admitted to Manchuria and, with Russian aid, were allowed to encircle the Communists. But Russia was accorded joint partnership in the Chinese Eastern and South Manchuria Railways,

provides for the compulsory transfer to Germany of the German populations remaining in Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary. How this additional massing of people within an area whose boundaries have been diminished can be reconciled with an agricultural and small-business type of economy is difficult to understand. The same dilemma exists with reference to the postwar economy of Japan.

Port Arthur was made a joint naval base, and Dairen was opened to Russian commerce. In addition the Russians were reported to be stripping Manchuria of the heavy industries built up in Manchuria by Japan, and to be securing concessions pertaining to commercial air rights and air fields. At the beginning of 1946 Russia appeared to have fully recovered the hold over the provinces of Northeast Asia possessed by the Czar between 1894 and 1905. Coupled with the advantages of her position in Manchuria, she held the northern half of Korea and a recognized claim to the Kurile Islands. She thus had become once more a Pacific power of tremendous potential force²⁴

How then does the war seem to have left the American quest for security? That in co-operation with the statesmanship of the entire English-speaking world the United States was capable of planning and launching a vast network of international organization fit to cope with postwar issues of peace and reconstruction, the preceding pages have demonstrated. That the United Nations and its various auxiliaries constitute a remarkable tribute to enlightened leadership and imaginative statecraft of the highest order cannot be questioned. Whatever the outcome, the attempt to achieve a new and better world has a legitimate claim on the memories of mankind—whether a century hence it be marked as the beginning of a new era or be condemned as a brilliant failure.

At the same time powerful forces of anarchy were at work, and fear of the coming of another and more terrible world war was deep and widespread. First of all, the ambitious moves of the Soviet Union, coupled with some evidence of powerful Communist attacks on the domestic institutions of the Western states, fostered fear and distrust toward Russia. In the second place, the United States was beginning to display tendencies itself of turning its back on the world and reverting to the dubious attitudes of the 1920's. A new isolationism was rearing up. Fears of Russia strengthened a tendency to repudiate the trusteeship system for the Pacific islands, and to put faith in armament alone in preserving the national security. Such a trap never fails to be alluring. In this instance the syl-

²⁴ The Sino-Soviet Treaty of August 14, 1945, must be read in connection with Russia's last-minute entry into the war against Japan and the collapse of that country four days previously. The Chinese foreign minister, T. V. Soong, journeyed to Moscow to negotiate the alliance. Evidently the Chinese had decided henceforth to lean on Moscow rather than on Washington and London, and must have estimated in advance the price Russia would demand. The rapprochement seems to involve the policing of Manchuria by Chinese troops, with the economic control in Russian hands. See *New York Times*, January 17, 1946.

logism ran as follows. the United States is now mistress of the Pacific by virtue of its fleet and the capture of the islands from Japan, no enemy can penetrate this screen of islands, especially if fortified and protected by the Navy; therefore make the islands the sovereign possessions of the United States. At the same time, the United States has the secret of how to make atomic bombs; therefore it holds an assault weapon so capable of inspiring terror that no nation will dare to attack it. On the other hand, since the United States is not interested in acquiring territory (islands not being "territory"), no nation has reason to be afraid of it.

Accompanying this easy series of deductions came a great tidal wave of popular sentiment for "bringing the boys back home" and reducing the magnificent wartime army to a paper force. So feverish was the rate of demobilization, so helter-skelter the dispersal of the country's armed strength, that within less than six months from the capitulation of Japan it was doubtful whether the United States could long perform the tasks of occupation it had assumed. Repeated warnings from the responsible leaders were having no effect. Selective service was petering out, and yet Congress refused to face the issue of continuing universal service. The public seemed utterly indifferent to the political consequences certain to be the results of its hysteria and its pathetic desire to cut off the locks of the American Samson. The movement was in complete contradiction to the underlying principle of the United Nations Charter that peace rests upon the military equality of the three great powers. Here and there in the United States voices were calling for a systematic study of questions of national defense. A national commission with broad civilian and military membership, it was urged, should be charged with the responsibility of examining every phase of the problem in the light of technological changes wrought by the war. The commission then should prepare a plan for Congressional consideration. By the spring of 1946, however, not a single step had been taken in recognition of this need. Nor was it clear that the American people recognized their occupation responsibilities. They had played a decisive role in the destruction of the enemy, now they must assume their fair share of the burden of managing and directing the people of the defeated countries.

At the beginning of 1946 there were disquieting signs also of a widening gap between the declared purposes of the United States in relation to its international economic and financial responsibilities and the disposition of the American people to shoulder those responsibilities. To ratify the Bretton Woods Agreements, for instance, was

merely a beginning. Fresh working capital must be made available to nations such as the United Kingdom, which had sacrificed its basic economy for the sake of winning the war. An intelligent program of long-term investment, backed by the full financial strength of the United States government, in the economic future of its allies was an indispensable corollary to the setting up of international economic and social agencies. Nursing the battered countries of western Europe back to normal economic health was no mere relief job; the essential purpose was not one of charity but of stimulating production abroad and of thus providing new purchasing power so that the American economy itself would have some assurance of the trade outlets it must have if it were to survive. Whether the American people grasped the importance of these issues, whether they had really come to appreciate the truth that peace, if it was to be durable, would demand the same high quality of teamwork and sacrifice as war—these were open questions in 1946. If the answers were to be in the negative, what chance could there be for operating the United Nations? And so the disconcerting question had to be raised again, as it had been in 1919: was Victory to be squandered,²⁶ or were the nations this time

²⁶ Answers to this question could hardly be given in an optimistic vein in the fall of 1946. China appeared to be launched on a full-scale civil war between the Communists and the Kuomintang. In hopes of bringing the parties together, the American government had dispatched General George C. Marshall, its Army chief of staff, on special mission. Marshall spent six months in China, but in August he and the newly-appointed American Ambassador candidly announced to the world that in their judgment peace could not be achieved (*Department of State Bulletin*, Vol. XV, No. 373, August 25, 1946, p. 384).

Meanwhile the rift between Russia and the Anglo-American powers had steadily grown worse. The Soviet Union was openly striving to erect exclusive spheres of influence in the heart of Europe, in the Middle East, and in Manchuria and adjoining portions of Korea and China. The Anglo-American powers on their part were pressing for peace treaties that would support the independence and economic stability of the weaker states and save them from falling under complete Russian domination. An alarming recurrence of incidents, involving attacks on American planes in regions as widely separated as Korea and Yugoslavia, reached a climax in the latter country in August. In all of these the hand of Russia was either known or suspected, and the Yugoslav attack was so flagrant as to bring a sharp demand for reparations from Washington. The over-all object of Soviet policy was believed to be directed at making the position of the Anglo-Americans so uncomfortable as to induce them to withdraw. Against this pressure from Moscow, Anglo-American policy showed signs of stiffening. In Germany, Britain and the United States brought about an economic merger of their respective occupation zones, and on September 7 the American Secretary of State, James F. Byrnes, delivered a studied pronouncement at Stuttgart reminding the world of the Potsdam policy of dealing with Germany as a single economic unit. Russia on the contrary had shown a determination to convert her own large occupation zone into a Soviet dependency. Likewise in the eastern Mediterranean Russian encroachments were meeting with resistance. A Soviet plea for control of the

sufficiently disciplined and chastened to carry over the lessons in co-operation learned in war to the problems of peace?

Dardanelles was rebuffed, and in order to leave no doubt on this score the American government dispatched a strong task force to Aegean waters.

Thus in September by both word and deed the United States was creating the impression that, if necessary, it was prepared for a showdown with the Soviets. But suddenly, within less than a week following the Byrnes statement at Stuttgart, the irrepressible Henry A. Wallace, Byrnes's colleague in the cabinet, burst forth in an amazing speech advocating the granting to Russia of substantially much that she wanted: a closed sphere of influence in Eastern and Central Europe. Wallace succeeded in making a laughing-stock out of his chief, the pathetic Harry Truman, who (to put the matter in its most charitable light) had absent-mindedly given his advance approval of the speech while yet supporting Byrnes in Europe. The speech threw consternation into the public and brought forth strong remonstrances from the American delegation in Europe. It was a bad blow to the prestige of American diplomacy. The President lamely tried to smooth over the incident, but additional complications were feared. Meanwhile the peace conference which had opened in Paris in August—the same that had been promised for the preceding spring—continued in its snail-like progress toward the conclusion of treaties with Italy and the former German satellite states, while the real tasks of the United Nations had not even begun.

FREEDOM OF THE SEAS

Protection of the Flag and of Trade Routes

AS A POPULAR expression, "freedom of the seas" first gained currency in the United States in connection with the contest for neutral rights during the wars between Great Britain and France. Thomas Jefferson popularized it as the foundation for his policy against Great Britain, and hence the doctrine developed as a sort of American battle cry leading up to the War of 1812. It retained this emotional quality throughout the nineteenth century, and was associated with the questionable principle that the flag at the mast-head provided absolute immunity from visit or search by a foreign warship in time of peace. The doctrine again came into play during the War of 1914-18 in association with neutral rights. In that war, however, it was directed more against Germany as the chief offender; but when Woodrow Wilson attempted to revitalize the phrase in 1918 as one of his Fourteen Points, his action was immediately interpreted on both sides of the Atlantic as a challenge to British sea power.

It is purely conventional, however, to identify "freedom of the seas" with questions of neutral versus belligerent rights; and, as will be shown in the chapters in Part III, it never was possible to agree on a clear line of demarcation between the right of the neutral to sail the seas as usual in time of war, taking advantage of the unusual opportunities to be found therein, and the right of the belligerent to employ the weapon of sea power as a means of defeating his enemy. It is a grave fallacy to believe that the doctrine of freedom of the seas has no other application than this.

The doctrine originated with the Romans as a fully developed principle of law, and it has had an immense variety of applications at the hands of maritime states ever since, by none more than by Great Britain herself. As conceived by the Romans, it was naturally inseparable from their supremacy on sea as well as on land, and was put into practice through the exercise of a police power. Following fundamentally in Roman footsteps, the British did not fail to associate freedom of the seas with naval power. It was sea power, for

instance, that defeated the Spanish attempt to fence off the Caribbean, not to mention the older Portuguese-Spanish effort to appropriate the seas between them. And it was British sea power that, with the downfall of Napoleon, made possible a great era of free trade throughout the world. The maritime commerce of all nations never enjoyed a period of greater security than during the century of British naval supremacy between 1814 and 1914. Force, or the threat of force, was employed against attempts at monopoly on the part of certain states and against common piracy. To try to separate the law of freedom of the seas from the use of the police power would be, therefore, to depart into the realm of fancy.

Unfortunately the space limits of this volume do not permit illustration of the many applications of freedom of the seas by the United States. But I have selected three cases to demonstrate the fundamental point that the United States has made no departure from Roman or British practice in that it too conceives of freedom of the seas in terms of law and force. The Navy itself originated as an instrument for policing American trade routes and protecting American vessels against pirates and lawless privateers. In the problem of the African slave trade there is a unique illustration of the way in which national jealousies can obstruct the effective use of sea power for the suppression of a dreadful social evil. Since this trade was international, its elimination required the use of an international maritime police. The eventual development and successful operation of such a force for the purpose is suggestive in connection with contemporary projects for the preservation of the freedom of the seas in the future.

The chapters belonging to this group are (1) The Naval War with France, 1798-1800; (2) The Mediterranean Trade and the Barbary Powers; (3) The African Slave Trade and the Right of Search.

CHAPTER 28

THE NAVAL WAR WITH FRANCE,
1798-1800

THE OUTBREAK of war between Britain and France in 1793 awakened the seafaring merchants of America to an opportunity they had not enjoyed for many years. Not since the beginnings of the Revolution had markets comparable to those of the British Empire been open to them. The loss of the old West Indian sugar trade, with its high earnings derived from the long haul of surplus sugar across the ocean, was particularly grievous. It had to be reckoned as part of the cost of political independence. After 1783 the Americans were definitely excluded from the benefits of the British colonial system, this meant that their ships could no longer share in the old "sugar triangle" of the eighteenth century which had spelled prosperity for New England; they could not engage in the slave trade with Africa, nor could they carry sugar direct to Great Britain in competition with British vessels. Since they had always been frozen out of the French, Spanish, and Dutch carrying trade, the Americans seemed fated for a permanent depression in their merchant marine.

After 1793, however, losses were quickly translated into profits. Prices for American flour skyrocketed both in Europe and the West Indies, particularly in view of a French crop failure, and everything else went accordingly. A barrel of flour bought for eight dollars in New York sold at two or three times that amount in the West Indies. Furthermore, the French opened their sugar trade to Yankee vessels for the first time, and American skippers were tempted by the profits of the long voyage from Haiti to Le Havre. Shipyards all along the Atlantic Coast began turning out small and medium-sized vessels in quantity in response to the sudden demand for ships, and a single voyage to the West Indies would net earnings which averaged between a third and a half the original cost of the vessel.

Fresh dangers accompanied this sudden war boom, nevertheless. Both the British and the French were eager to make use of the American merchant marine for their own advantage, but each was naturally ill-disposed to let the enemy profit by it. The United States during the 1790's was in the interesting position of having a large

and enterprising merchant marine but no navy to give it protection. The situation gave real point to the ideas which Alexander Hamilton had expressed in 1787. Here was the United States actually in a position to capture the West Indian trade and perhaps even exercise a balance of power in the Caribbean region, but without naval power such an undertaking was out of the question. The Washington administration, by a majority of two votes in the House of Representatives, managed to get a naval bill before the House and finally enacted into law, by a division of 50 to 39, the first measure of its kind in the history of the United States; moreover, it aimed a blow at sectional prejudice, which had almost killed the measure, by distributing contracts throughout the country for building and supplying the vessels. The six frigates for which the Act provided were intended especially for the protection of American commerce against the pirates of Algiers in the western Mediterranean and were, to be sure, in no sense a makeweight against British or French seapower, nevertheless the Washington administration conceived of them as the beginning of a standing American Navy.

In the meantime the American government adjusted itself to the circumstances of the situation in the Atlantic and the Caribbean. Its key instrument was the treaty which John Jay concluded with Britain in 1794, a treaty we have already analyzed as a vital step toward American security in the Old Northwest. From the standpoint of maritime commerce also the treaty yielded important results; it met the British conception of contraband, but it promised indemnification by Great Britain for losses to American shippers for previous seizures of cargoes on the high seas. The vital products were grain and sugar. American exports of flour to France had been intended to fill the hole left by the French crop failure of 1793, but the British quite naturally detained as many of the grain ships as they could intercept; likewise the French took advantage of American bottoms in an effort to save their colonial sugar trade during the war. The British in turn thwarted this by invoking the Rule of 1756 which refused recognition of the legality of a trade in time of war which their enemy had not permitted in peace. British men-of-war and privateers from the Bermudas and the Bahamas fell upon hundreds of Yankee ships which had ventured into the Caribbean to take advantage of the French offer.

The results of this experience were reflected in the provisions of the Jay Treaty. The two governments agreed to the establishment of a mixed commission to adjudicate maritime losses on both sides, Britain to indemnify American owners for their losses incurred

as described above and the United States to pay British shipowners for the depredations of French privateers which had been outfitted in American harbors. In due course the mixed commission, consisting of two Englishmen and three Americans, awarded claims to be paid by the United States amounting to \$143,000, while the total damage¹ inflicted by British forces on American shipping during the same period was fixed at \$12,000,000.

The French had already filled their cup of exasperation against the United States for rejecting the role of benevolent neutral in the war. Thus they felt they had a right to expect as a legacy from the alliance of the American Revolution. The two treaties which had implemented that alliance in 1778 were still valid, and though the French did not ask the United States to enter the war in 1793, they did expect this country to allow itself to be used as a base of operations against their enemy, on both land and sea. For reasons to be described at greater length in an appropriate chapter below, the Washington administration dashed these hopes with cold water, fixed its attention on a policy of real neutrality, and reinforced its position through the successful negotiation of John Jay in London. Naturally the French reacted violently to the American policy, they denounced it as pure perfidy; and suspicion became conviction when the terms of Jay's Treaty became known in Paris. To the French this instrument seemed little short of an alliance between the United States and Great Britain.

It was, of course, a separation of vital national interests between France and the United States that invoked the failure of French and American minds to meet over the interpretation of the treaties of 1778. A close loyalty to the spirit of these treaties on the part of

¹ Elsewhere we have described the scathing criticism that Mr. Jay and his treaty encountered among the American people, and the difficulty the Washington administration experienced in ratifying the instrument. To this day historians have tended to follow the original line of popular condemnation so far as the maritime provisions of the treaty are concerned. Actually, however, both the American government and the American merchants affected would seem to have fared well by this treaty. The merchants got their money, as provided; furthermore, they were promised payment for future seizures of flour and provisions made by the British Navy. And they continued to profit far more than they lost by the great European war. Though the direct French colonial trade in sugar was cut off, the Americans achieved the same end by means of an indirect voyage touching at an American port. Thus they continued to enjoy a monopoly of the business, while the French continued to get their sugar. The British indulged the practice, with a few exceptions, until 1806.

As an instrument of policy the Jay Treaty permitted the American government to maintain its neutrality in the war with dignity, in addition to securing important diplomatic equivalents from Great Britain in the Old Northwest. We shall have occasion, of course, to refer to this treaty again under Part III.

Washington was bound to mean the sacrifice of American independence. Again let us remember that French and American minds had never met on common ground in this respect. France had intended the United States as her makeweight against Britain, the war in 1793 was her opportunity, so she thought, for cashing in on the benefits of the original alliance. From the standpoint of strict interpretation, Washington gave the French no cause to complain of bad faith. The treaties did not obligate him to aid the French in the manner they desired; neither did the lip service that the United States paid to "freedom of the seas" in the commercial treaty with France preclude it from making a separate bargain with Great Britain. The only difference lay in the definition of contraband goods; but it so happened that the definition applied by Jay's Treaty worked against the interests of France. Hence the reproaches the French heaped on Washington's head.

In reality, however, sauce for the goose was also sauce for the gander. France was interested in making her naval arm felt in Great Britain, and when she found American ships carrying provisions and naval stores to British ports she fell upon them in the same manner as the British had. Looking backward, we have to confess that the American shipping business in those days was pure speculation, uniquely so in the absence of a Navy to give force to the legal rights which were claimed from either side. Shipmasters ventured out at their own risk. If sailing to one of the Caribbean islands, they were in danger of being picked up by a British, Spanish, or French privateer at one of the bottlenecks to that sea; if sailing to the Mediterranean or to a Spanish or a Portuguese port, they were likely to fall victim to a Barbary corsair. If entering the English Channel, they were good prize for a British or French war vessel or privateer, depending on whether they were destined for a British or a Continental port. And if, as many Yankee ships were, the vessel was a "tramp" in the French coastal trade, she was a prospect for a British captor. Maltreatment, imprisonment, starvation, death, impressment were the possibilities that awaited skippers and their crews, total financial loss was the risk of the owner or the insurer of the vessel. Nevertheless profits were good, especially after Jay's Treaty had gone into force; and masters and crews could readily be found, in return for good wages and the chance of sharing in the profits, to take the vessels wherever the trading was lively.

As between France and the United States the practical effect of Jay's Treaty was to bring on a partial breach in diplomatic relations

James Monroe, Washington's Republican-minded emissary in Paris, was himself so put out by the Treaty that he felt the President ought to be defeated in the coming election and he told the French so. No one knew until less than two months before the election of 1796 that Washington had decided against running for a third term. Monroe's intimation coincided with the reports the Directory was accustomed to receive from its minister in Philadelphia, M. Fauchet; that gentleman was also optimistic that intrigue in behalf of the Jeffersonian Republicans, well known for their French leanings, could defeat Washington and the Federalist party.² Suspicious of Monroe's fidelity, Washington ordered him to withdraw from Paris in December; but an attempt by the President to substitute Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, a conservative Federalist, met with a studied rebuff. Meanwhile the French envoy in Philadelphia had already publicly announced a suspension of relations just before the election, and French vessels of war, under orders from the Directory, had resumed depredations on American commerce from which Monroe had secured temporary relief. Clearly the Directory was bent on exploiting the unpopularity of Jay's Treaty in America as a means of bending American foreign policy back to meet French interests. The trick having failed (though we recall that John Adams, Washington's successor, was a president by only three electoral votes), the Directory then ordered the attacks on American shipping intensified but hinted that it would receive a minister who had a proper attitude toward France. It was still hoping to effect a change in American policy.

Adams' response was to accept the invitation but to send a mission of three, two of whom were unlikely to favor the change the French wished. One of them, Elbridge Gerry, a Massachusetts Republican, was ready to lean over backward in order to bring about a reconciliation, but the other two were not so minded. They were Pinckney, the once rebuffed envoy, and John Marshall, a Virginian Federalist. Though the youngest of the group, Marshall appears to have dominated the mission. His protagonist was Charles Maurice de Talleyrand, who had spent some years as an exile in America during the Reign of Terror in France but had survived his enemies in that country and returned to become Foreign Minister under the Directory. Talleyrand was alive to the importance of keeping the United States away from England, but nevertheless he felt sure he could intimidate the American mission into granting a loan to the

² The Directory was the official title of the dictatorial clique that ruled the revolutionary French Republic from 1795 to 1799.

French Republic and paying a bribe of \$250,000 in addition to himself and the Directors. His arrogance was a measure of the power with which the revolutionary Republic preened itself in those days, and the fact that the American mission lingered in Paris for over five months in the face of this attempt to drive a corrupt bargain shows how very conscious it was of its weakness. The commissioners were willing to recommend the payment of the bribe, which they knew was a customary procedure in Paris, provided they could reach a definite agreement with the French and secure the stoppage of the depredations on American commerce. These now exceeded in severity anything that the British had attempted. Any American vessel carrying cargo to Britain or to a British colonial port, regardless of the character of the cargo, or any ship carrying a British-owned cargo was open to seizure. The Directory's decrees of 1796 and 1797 offered a field day for French privateers.

Talleyrand refused to receive the American mission officially. Instead he baited it with mysterious visits from three obscure agents, described subsequently by John Adams in his report to Congress as Messieurs X, Y, and Z. These agents demanded the loan and the bribe before any progress could be made toward negotiating a treaty. By this time the French had become masters of the smaller nations of western Europe and were aiming to mobilize the United States in their war for the destruction of Great Britain. Marshall grasped this, and he also realized that if the United States consented to become the tool of France it would lose its independence. It was the weakness of the Adams administration at home, however, and the persistent division of popular sentiment, that kept him and Pinckney in Paris. If they returned home empty-handed, the French party in America might gain the upper hand. Talleyrand knew this too, and his agents repeatedly confronted the American mission with the possibility.

At the same time the French diplomat was loath to confess failure himself. America as a neutral was still useful to France, especially if she could be kept away from a British alliance. Apparently what the Directory wanted most from the United States was the loan. It was money that it lacked in its ability to wage aggressive war, and it was aiming to knock out Britain. Its best chance of success lay in terrifying the Americans with the specter of what the revolutionary Republican clubs in the United States could do to destroy the administration if the envoys returned without a treaty. Through X, Y, and Z, Talleyrand alternately blustered and pleaded with the commissioners, inventing ingenious methods by which the United

States might meet the French demands without seeming to prostitute itself. Beaumarchais, the former go-between in the gun-running business of the American Revolution, was brought in. Beaumarchais had a claim against the state of Virginia, and John Marshall was his attorney. If a judgment could be secured from the federal courts, the \$250,000 bribe could be included in the payment of the claim to Beaumarchais. And the loan upon which the Directory was so insistent might be arranged through the sale at par to the United States of an issue of depreciated bonds of the Batavian Republic. This was the formerly independent United Dutch Provinces, now the helpless creature of France. To Marshall's mind the example of Holland was hardly reassuring. France, said Beaumarchais to him,

thought herself sufficiently powerful to give the law to the world and exacted from all around her money to enable her to finish successfully her war against England.

The American envoy did not need to be told this, for he had already reached his own conclusion on the real price the United States would pay if it agreed to the loan. Marshall relates:

I told him [Mr. X] that no nation estimated her [France's] power more highly than America or wished more to be on amicable terms with her, but that one object was still dearer to us than the friendship of France which was our national independence. That America had taken a neutral station. . . . That to lend . . . money to a belligerent power abounding in everything requisite for war but money was to relinquish our neutrality and take part in the war. To lend this money under the lash & coercion of France was to relinquish the government of ourselves & to submit to a foreign government imposed on us by force . . .

Eventually Talleyrand overplayed his hand. Marshall wrote him a lengthy memorial in January 1798 in defense of American neutrality, including relations with Great Britain under the Jay Treaty. To this document the French diplomat made an equally long reply denouncing the Federalist government of the United States and singling out Gerry as the only commissioner friendly to France. Talleyrand intended his paper for circulation in the Republican press in America to the end that it would crystallize animosity against the Federalists. Marshall was now convinced that the French meant war, conditioned only by a successful attack on Britain. "It is perhaps justly believed that on this issue is staked the independence of Europe and America," he reported. France was preparing a veteran army for invasion of England, he continued, and, once having made a landing, expected help from a "formidable and organized" revolu-

tionary party in that country. England would then be in "the situation of the batavian and cisalpine republics and . . . its wealth, its commerce, and its fleets will be at the disposition of this [French] government."⁸

Marshall and Pinckney abandoned their mission in April 1798, leaving Gerry in Paris to indulge the thought that he alone could preserve the peace between the two countries. Meanwhile Talleyrand's propaganda move in the United States was anticipated by John Adams. The President favored Congress with copies of the dispatches received from Paris, and they were immediately published and given wide circulation. The effect was devastating. Jefferson and his pro-French Republicans were stunned into silence, the tricolor and the French revolutionary cockade used as decorations on American hats suddenly vanished; the "Marseillaise" gave way to the new song, "Hail Columbia," in popularity; and the toast, "Millions for defense but not a cent for tribute!" represented the new feeling of warlike nationalism. Federalists like Timothy Pickering, the Secretary of State, who now thought war was certain with "the ambitious republic aiming at a universal empire," hoped that it would bring real union within the United States.

Pickering feared the French would try for a foothold in Louisiana, and he made a gesture in the direction of Great Britain. If the prospective enemy was to be driven off, sea power must be the instrument; but this the United States did not possess. Would the British government lend, or sell on credit, six ships of the line and at least an equal number of frigates? The United States would not negotiate a written alliance, but by posting troops on the Mississippi would aid in repelling a French attack on Canada from the direction of Louisiana. The British government showed no interest in the proposed loan of the battleships, probably it saw no useful purpose in deputizing the United States to enforce defense policies on the high seas that were already its own. But it did, after some prodding from Pickering and the American minister in London, agree to a loan of twenty-four cannon and eighteen hundred shot which had been removed from an old French ship lying in Halifax. The American government wanted the cannon for the defense of Charleston, which it feared would be attacked by French ships from Haiti; and it sent vessels to Halifax in November 1798 to get the cannon and shot. It promised to return the loan, once the emergency was over; but the

⁸ These extracts are from Marshall's papers, quoted by Albert J. Beveridge, *The Life of John Marshall* (4 vols., Boston, 1916), II, 274-75, 318, 321-22.

cannon were really useless to the British government, and the next year it consented that they be kept by the United States⁴

The upshot of the X-Y-Z exposure was an armed conflict on the high seas with France, lasting more than two years. At Adams' instance, Congress in May 1798 authorized hostilities against French armed ships found hovering off the American coast; and in July it followed this with an act empowering American warships and privateers to capture French armed ships, public or private, anywhere on the high seas. The President had already won Congressional favor for a separate Navy Department, a step which the Federalists had long advocated. Strictly speaking, the resulting hostilities did not constitute "war," since French citizens in the United States were not treated as enemy aliens, neither were French vessels molested when engaged in peaceful pursuits. In later years the Supreme Court of the United States described the affair as "imperfect" or quasi-war. Only French ships of war and privateers were the objects of attack. Since the purpose was to protect American sea-going commerce, this was all that was necessary.

Benjamin Stoddert, the first Secretary of the Navy, collected some fifty armed ships to make up the first American Navy. The best ones were three frigates built under the Act of 1794 and now nearing completion; most of the remainder were converted merchantmen. The duties of the new Navy were to convoy American cargo ships to the West Indies and to patrol the waters between Charleston, South Carolina, and the Venezuelan coast. Most of the operations took place in the bottlenecks of the Caribbean and the island waters between Puerto Rico and Curaçao. Stoddert's reports showed, for instance, that in August 1798 a fleet of eighty American vessels, with cargoes valued at two million dollars, was blocked up in Havana harbor by a few French privateers. To rescue the American ships he sent the frigate "Constellation" and the "Baltimore" to Havana. But Stoddert and his enterprising commanders were not content with mere convoying. The nest of the trouble was the French island of Guadeloupe, from which some sixty to eighty privateers sallied forth to prey on commerce all the way from the American coast to South America. The "war" was not a contest between the French Navy proper and the United States forces, the bulk of the French fleet was bottled up on the other side of the

⁴ The documents on this interesting case of lend-lease are to be found in Manning, *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States: Canadian Relations, 1784-1860* (2 vols., Washington, D.C., 1940-42), I, 136-45, 509, 515. My attention was called to them by Professor J. Bartlet Brebner of Columbia University.

Atlantic by the British, and the hostilities were aimed chiefly at corsairs and free-lance commanders of a few French frigates based on Guadeloupe. Hungry for the rich prizes that had to cross their path, these raiders had scant respect for the orders that came from Paris to cease depredations.

Meanwhile Talleyrand realized his mistake and followed the advice he got from Thomas Jefferson through a private emissary to do his best to discourage the Federalists in America from carrying the war to extreme lengths. Jefferson feared for his party if the French persisted in their course, and Talleyrand saw in the American naval preparations only trouble for his own country. The United States would now be a makeweight on the side of England. In July, the very month that Congress authorized full hostilities against French armed ships, the Directory repealed its decrees and revoked the commissions of its West Indian corsairs, but without results, as we have seen. Talleyrand had already opened up an avenue of approach to Philadelphia through the American minister at The Hague, William Vans Murray, with whom he established a contact. Murray proved receptive, and Adams in February 1799 was induced to make him the head of a new mission to France. The President had previously vowed he would never send another envoy to that country without assurances that he would be received as "the representative of a free, independent, and powerful nation", and Talleyrand's repeated overtures and promises that such would be the case were at last convincing. Adams associated two other eminent Federalists, William R. Davie, former governor of North Carolina, and Oliver Ellsworth, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, with Vans Murray; he was anxious to speed this new and third mission off to Paris, but the Senate haggled over Murray's appointment and the envoys did not reach their destination until March 1800. By that time the political situation in Paris was less favorable for speedy negotiation than it had been the year before.

The Americans went to Paris with three objects in mind: (1) to prevent the quasi-war on the seas from degenerating into a full struggle; (2) to rid the United States of the entangling treaties of 1778; and (3) to secure indemnities for the large losses incurred since 1793 from French spoliations. The French too, Talleyrand in particular, wished to avoid war. But stopping the depredations was not so easy. The West Indian corsairs were beyond Parisian control, and American naval operations against them continued for more than a year after the mission to Paris had fulfilled its purpose. It was not even possible for the French foreign office to stop the

occasional attacks on American vessels sailing in European waters. This handicap did not interfere with the negotiations with the American mission, however, and the treaty was negotiated, signed, and ratified before the clashes at sea were brought under control.

As for the treaties of 1778, Congress had declared them abrogated at the time it authorized the naval operations, but that did not end the problem. Full relations could not be resumed with France unless that country too agreed to consider the former alliance at an end. The French on their part were not deaf to the plea for indemnities, provided the treaties could be revived; but if the alliance was to be sacrificed they saw no reason for making financial redress. Actually the treaties were dead, so far as their usefulness to France was concerned, and Talleyrand was shrewd enough to see this. The favors that the French had wanted from the alliance—the rights to raise recruits on American soil, to outfit privateers, and to use American ports as havens for the reception of captured vessels—had never been forthcoming. But the French were not going to make the formal concessions until the Americans had renounced the financial claims.

Nevertheless, Talleyrand set a high value on American friendship, especially in view of Jefferson's prospects of winning the presidential election in 1800. Jefferson's accession, he declared, should bring the United States

back to us, but we should not forget that we have improved our position by moderation and by complete non-intervention in their internal affairs. . . . Mr. Jefferson will consider it a duty to unite around him all true Americans and to resume with full force the system of balance between France and England which alone is wise for the United States. This policy accords best with our own interests. We have nothing to desire in the United States except to see them prosper. Without agitation, without intrigue, jealousy of England and her demands will lead them to a rapprochement with us.⁵

Six months of diplomatic hedging—the three Americans on one side, three French on the other with Talleyrand an influential figure in the background—failed to bring concessions on fundamentals. Finally the Americans proposed a formula by which the two governments could ignore the alliance and indemnity issues for the present and write a convention that would bring hostilities on the seas to a close. The parties would "negotiate further on these sub-

⁵ Quoted by E. Wilson Lyon, "The Franco-American Convention of 1800," *Journal of Modern History*, XXI (1940), 318.

jects at a convenient time, and until they may have agreed upon these points, the said Treaties . . . shall have no operation." On this basis the convention was drafted and signed, September 30, 1800. Warships which had been captured by either side were to be restored. Otherwise the convention reflected a mutual American and French interest in neutral commerce, in contrast to the concessions the United States had made to the British in Jay's Treaty.

The Senate accepted the convention but on the condition that the formula respecting the treaties and indemnities should be discarded and the convention limited to eight years' duration. This would enable the United States to knock again at the French door for money after the convention had terminated. But the French were not to be so easily ensnared; and they responded by saying they would ratify the agreement only if the financial pretensions, like the alliance, were considered renounced. To this the United States finally agreed. More than a century later Congress voted money sufficient to pay off in part claims kept alive by the heirs of American families that had suffered losses at the hands of French corsairs before 1800.

From this whole experience the United States gained permanent relief from intrigue by the French in its domestic affairs. The policy had been chronic with the French authorities, but they learned their lesson from the explosion over the X-Y-Z papers. Furthermore, the United States escaped being left with a contest with France on its hands at a time when Britain was preparing to patch up a temporary peace. On the other hand, the convention of 1800 did not bring immediate safety for American ships at sea. That continued to depend on the efficiency of the new Navy. And the French problem in North America was apparently just beginning. The day after Bonaparte, who had meanwhile overthrown the Directory, signed the convention with the United States, France signed a treaty with Spain binding that power to return Louisiana to the French colors.

CHAPTER 29

THE MEDITERRANEAN TRADE
AND THE BARBARY POWERS

ONE OF THE MOST urgent problems facing the United States at the close of the Revolution was that of recapturing its foreign trade. To the former colonies of the British Crown this had been so extensive and so varied as to mean the difference between poverty and riches. A substantial portion of their previous trade found its natural level in the resumption of a direct exchange with the mother country, once the hostilities had ended. Trade with the West Indies and with western Europe benefited from the war boom of the 1790's, in the manner described in the preceding chapter. But the once important Mediterranean field was still a total loss. Prior to the Revolution this area had absorbed one-sixth of the wheat and flour exports of the Colonies and one-fourth of the value of the dried and pickled fish, a very important item in the economy of New England. The business was at the mercy of the pirate states of North Africa except for the safe conduct it enjoyed at the hands of Great Britain. Through gifts, treaties, and the judicious use of force the British government normally secured freedom for its merchant marine in the middle sea. The temptation to keep down the competition of its commercial rivals, however, was sufficient inducement for it to treat with the pirates rather than to destroy them. The wealthier powers of the European Continent, notably France and Spain, pursued the same course, with resulting damage to the carrying trade of the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, and the Italian states. The effect was to produce a constant competition for the favor of the four Barbary powers—Morocco, Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli—each one of which counted tribute and plunder a legitimate part of its economy.

Generally speaking, Morocco was the best-behaved of the four and shared a respectable trade with Europe and the American Colonies. This was fortunate, because, having two coasts, it could have terrorized shipping on the Atlantic as well as the Mediterranean, had it chosen. Algiers, its neighbor to the East, was habitually the most vicious. Its corsairs hovered near the Straits of Gibraltar, and vessels entering the Mediterranean that failed to carry the necessary passports were almost certain to fall into their

clutches. Masters and men were then stripped of everything, even the clothes on their backs, and taken to Algiers to perform forced labor on the docks and vessels of the pirates. A money ransom was the only means of securing their release, and the price per man depended on his rating, on the number of Christian slaves the native Dey already had on hand, and on the number of states with which the Algerines happened to be at peace. It was the pirates' deliberate choice always to be at war with some power, and the making of peace with one was usually the signal for the beginning of a war with another.

Algerine pirates alone were sufficient explanation why no American vessel as late as 1790 had ventured inside the Straits. This did not mean that Americans were not among the victims. Twenty-one of them were being held for ransom in 1785, and the price demanded was sixty thousand dollars. The impoverished government at Philadelphia had nothing like this sum to offer, and the men continued indefinitely in captivity. Among them was a James Leander Cathcart, who became chief Christian clerk to the Dey. Eventually ransomed, this man was sent to Tripoli as American consul, and his reports were fundamental in keeping the home government informed of conditions in the Mediterranean. Ordinarily the corsairs did not rove the Atlantic, but after Spain had bought a costly peace they had a temporary escape through the Straits of Gibraltar and the American captives had been among the resulting victims. Subsequently the Portuguese posted a patrol near the western end of the Straits; having an Atlantic trade to protect, Portugal found this method of controlling the pirates more effective than the purchase of a treaty. From their fortress at Gibraltar the British declined the role of policeman; a money deal with the pirates better suited their purposes.

Under the real protection thus furnished by the Portuguese, American trade flourished with Spain and Portugal after the Revolution. But it was dependent on the indefinite continuance of "war" between the Portuguese and the Algerines. In 1793 the Portuguese patrol was temporarily withdrawn, and the results were appalling. The Algerine fleet passed the Straits and within two months captured at least eleven American vessels. Fears were expressed that the pirates would prowl as far as the coast of North America, but luckily the Portuguese soon resumed the "war." With Tunis and Tripoli, the two smaller and weaker states to the east of Algiers, the Americans did not at first have contact. But the Tunisians and Tripolines had a potential nuisance value and were to be reckoned

with if ever the Mediterranean trade was to be reopened. European governments made it a practice to appease all four of these predatory despotisms.

Originally the Americans had tried to induce France to perform the protective function previously executed by the British government but the French in the treaties of 1778 would do no more than pledge moral support. Actually the Americans were thrown on their own devices. Morocco was the first to give them a sharp reminder of what was expected, when she seized an American brig in 1784 and took it into Tangier. The Emperor showed himself open to reason, however, and readily made a treaty with no tribute or ransom provisions attached. Supposedly the treaty was good for fifty years, but the Americans discovered otherwise when there was a change in the Moroccan succession a few years later. Gifts of field pieces, small arms, and gunpowder had to be sent to appease the new ruler. It was a different matter when it came to making peace with the other Barbary powers. The Dey of Algiers finally consented to an agreement in 1795 in return for a cash payment of \$585,000, the gift of a fully equipped frigate, incidental presents to himself, and the payment of an annual tribute in naval stores to the value of \$21,600. No time limit was set on the payment of the tribute. The estimated cost of the treaty to the United States was nearly a million dollars, but this proved only a beginning. The frigate was duly built at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, in 1797 and dispatched for the service of the Algerines. But the value of the masts and stores intended for the tribute was soon found to run far in excess of the original estimates. The treaty had called for payment in terms of Algerine values. Masts thus estimated to cost thirty dollars apiece, delivered at Algiers, actually cost from six to eight hundred. Confronted with this dilemma, the American government in 1797 got ready two schooners in the hope that the Algerines could be persuaded to accept them in lieu of the stores. Later it tried to substitute cash payments for the stores; but this approach had its drawbacks—the pirates kept their own fleet going through gifts of vessels and naval stores from other countries, and refused to consider cash subsidies as an adequate equivalent.

In a measure the Mediterranean was open to American ships after the Algerine treaty of 1795, but a shipmaster could never foretell his fate. Delays in receiving the tribute payment were an excuse for seizing additional American vessels and holding the crews for ransom. Then there were Tunis and Tripoli with which to settle. The Dey of Algiers promised to aid the United States in getting a treaty

with these powers, whom he regarded as his vassals. The Tripolitan treaty invoked the payment of forty thousand Spanish dollars plus thirteen gold watches, that with Tunis, concluded in 1797, involved \$107,000 in ransom money. These agreements were relatively mild in that they did not incur the obligation of an annual tribute.

Meanwhile the Washington administration had used the Algerine menace in 1794 as an inducement to Congress to provide a Navy. The Act authorized the construction of six frigates but provided that if peace with Algiers should be reached in the meantime construction was to stop. Congress appeared to be ignorant of the potential threat from Tunis and Tripoli. The Algerine treaty of 1795 found all six frigates partially built, and work on them had to stop, but by dint of much persuasion Washington managed to get consent to finish three of them, and the frigates "United States," "Constitution," and "Constellation" were accordingly commissioned in 1797. To these were added the new vessels under the Naval Act of 1798; but, as we remember, American forces were occupied chiefly with the French and had little protection to spare for the Mediterranean trade during these years. When in October 1800 the frigate "George Washington" appeared in the harbor of Algiers bearing the annual tribute in stores, the Dey demanded that she go on an official mission for him to the court of his Turkish overlord at Constantinople. The captain had the choice of consenting or of seeing wholesale descent upon American merchant vessels that happened then to be in the Mediterranean, not to mention the imprisonment of himself and all the members of his ship. In the circumstances there was little to do but acquiesce, and the voyage was undertaken with a cargo, among other things, of "100 negro Turks, 60 Turkish women, 2 lions, 2 tygers, 4 horses, 200 sheep, besides jewels and money."

At this time the United States was a year and a half in arrears on its payments and was in debt to a Jewish merchant of Algiers to the extent of nearly fifty thousand dollars. The Portuguese were trying to make peace with the Algerines, and the Bashaw of Tripoli was demanding an extra present as his price for letting American vessels alone. At the end of the trouble with France the government in Washington had no means of knowing whether the Barbary powers were waging war or not. It sent a force of three frigates and an armed schooner with orders to offer thirty thousand dollars to Algiers, if the latter was peaceful, and ten thousand to Tripoli. But if any of the Barbary powers had in the meantime declared war the American forces were to attack their ships wherever they could

find them This was the first American squadron to appear in the Mediterranean, and when it reached Tripoli in July 1801 its commander, Captain Dale, discovered that the Bashaw had already cut down the flagstaff of the American consulate, the usual Barbary method of declaring war.

There followed an ineffective attempt to blockade the port of Tripoli in co-operation with Swedish forces. Actually the blockade existed mainly on paper, while Dale scattered his small forces in a none too successful effort to convoy American merchant ships to and from Italian ports The war between France and Great Britain had tempted American shipping with the lion's share of the carrying trade of the Mediterranean, and despite the dangers from the pirates American vessels flocked to the middle sea in numbers. The obvious weakness of the American squadron meanwhile brought trouble with Algiers, Tunis, and Morocco The Dey of Algiers got his hands on the thirty thousand dollars but refused to consider the money as a substitute for the promised stores, Tunis and Morocco made an issue of the American blockade of Tripoli for preventing shipments of grain to that port, and declared war. The American consuls managed to hold them off, however, with promises. Morocco was to get one hundred gun carriages just as soon as they could be made and shipped from the United States, and the Bey of Tunis was offered twenty thousand dollars. The depths of misfortune were reached when the frigate "Philadelphia," cruising off the bay of Tripoli in October 1803, accidentally grounded on the rocks and was captured with all her officers and men.

There was some improvement in the general situation at this time when a relief squadron of seven vessels under the able command of Commodore Preble reached the Mediterranean. A naval demonstration in the Bay of Tangier brought a pledge of peace from Morocco, a restoration of vessels that had been seized, and a generous gift of meat and provisions The harbor of Tripoli was blockaded in force in November, and in the following February Stephen Decatur performed his daring exploit of boarding the captured "Philadelphia" and burning it to the water's edge Preble aimed to make an example of Tripoli, and to that end secured a loan from the King of the Two Sicilies of six gunboats and two bomb vessels, with arms and ammunition; but the command was changed, and a general attack in August on the town failed to bring the decisive victory.

In the meantime the American consul at Tunis, William Eaton, had primed the State Department to support Hamet Karamanli, the

dispossessed brother of the reigning Bashaw of Tripoli, in an attempt to win the throne. Eaton and Hamet were taken on an American frigate from Tunis to Alexandria, whence they led a motley army some five hundred miles across the desert to capture the town of Derna on the eastern edge of Tripoli. Their victory availed them nothing, however. Consul Lear from Algiers had the sole authority to make peace, and he and Commodore Barron who now commanded the squadron investing Tripoli, refused to support the cause of Hamet. The American forces had never been better prepared in the four years of war than they were now. Fourteen warships were in the Mediterranean, and eighteen more were on the way; yet Lear bought a peace with the Bashaw for the sum of sixty thousand dollars, payable as ransom for the captives from the "Philadelphia," plus an understanding that each new consul appointed to the post at Tripoli would bring a "present"¹

Tunis and Algiers continued to extort concessions, and in 1812, taking advantage of the hostilities between Great Britain and the United States, the Algerines renewed their depredations on American vessels. At the end of the War of 1812 Madison sent two squadrons to the Mediterranean to enforce peace. After attacking and capturing a few Algerine ships, Commodore Stephen Decatur signed a treaty in June 1815 on the deck of his flagship; under this agreement the Algerines gave up their right to tribute and surrendered the Americans in their custody without ransom.

Through the years in which American squadrons conducted operations in the Mediterranean they used the British bases of Gibraltar and Malta and the Sicilian base at Syracuse; stores and provisions were deposited in advance at Gibraltar for the supply of the ships, and the commanders drew on funds placed with bankers in London and in Leghorn, Italy, for meeting the expenses of the expedition. In spite of the chronic friction with Britain over impressment and neutral rights, there was thus a considerable degree of co-operation between Americans and British in the Mediterranean. The American operations would have been impossible without the use of the British bases. At the same time there was no thought of concerted action against the pirates; and between the years 1807 and 1815 American naval forces were absent from the region. Except for the attempted attack on Tripoli in August 1804, no effort was made to destroy the pirates at their source. American

¹ The excuse given for this temporizing was that the Bashaw threatened otherwise to slay his captives. No one at the time reproached Lear and the American naval commander for failing to threaten reprisals.

naval commanders lacked the authority to take extreme measures. The United States was among the first to employ force systematically for the protection of its Mediterranean commerce, but its operations were inconclusive and it did not plan to patrol the area indefinitely. The Decatur Treaty ended the tribute system. There was a better reason than this treaty, however, why the corsairs never revived their depredations on American ships. Fate overtook them from another direction. In 1816 a combined British and Dutch fleet drew up off the harbor of Algiers, gave the town a thorough pounding, and annihilated the pirate fleet.

CHAPTER 30

THE AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE AND THE RIGHT OF SEARCH

ATTEMPTS to abolish the African slave trade—a wretched business that had grown large and prosperous in the eighteenth century—date from the era of the Napoleonic wars. The trade was international, though British dealers had captured most of it in the eighteenth century. Slaves were bought from tribal chiefs along the west coast of Africa and marketed principally in the West Indies and South America. The fountainhead of the reform movement was Great Britain itself, whose antislavery societies achieved a brilliant success in kindling public opinion against the traffic. Slaving under the British flag was forbidden by law in 1807, and shortly thereafter a British squadron commenced keeping regular vigil off the African coast to see that the law was enforced. The slave trade under the British flag speedily disappeared. Outside of England, however, the antislavery movement fell short of a crusading spirit. It did have enough vitality in the United States to result in the enactment of a similar statute by Congress in the same year as the British law, and at the Peace of Ghent in 1814 it was agreed that each party would continue its efforts toward abolition of the trade.

Effective suppression depended on international co-operation, however, and British diplomacy was bent on bringing this about. It was of no consequence for one or two nations to forbid the slave trade; the traffic could simply shift to another flag and be exploited

by other nationalities. Unless all maritime nations agreed to forbid the trade and united on making the prohibition effective, British efforts would merely result in transferring the business to some less conscientious nation. With this possibility in view, Lord Castlereagh, the great statesman who influenced the peace settlement at Vienna in 1815, conceived of an international naval police to patrol the coast of Africa, to be made up of units from the several maritime nations in proportion to their mutual interest and convenience. Each nation was to exercise the right to stop and search any suspected vessel, regardless of the flag at the masthead; but no vessel was to be seized or detained unless there were actually slaves on board. When a naval officer captured a slave ship, he was to submit the case to a mixed court, comprised of judges of the several nationalities.

Castlereagh's plan had the makings of a true international system for the policing of the seas; but the great foreign minister was greeted with skepticism and indifference. The mountainous labor of the Congress of Vienna hardly brought forth a mole hill. The general reaction on the Continent was that Britain was now trying to force other nations to share her sacrifices and ratify a system that would give her unlimited power on the high seas. Some nations were eager to seize the chance of capturing the slave trade for themselves; few were ready to join the international police, and they all looked upon the *mutual* right of search as merely a disguise for British naval supremacy—the British squadron, of course, would outnumber any of the others. The basic fact, however, appears to have been jealousy of British leadership and lack of sentiment outside of Great Britain opposed to the slave trade. Castlereagh's ideas for *sharing* the policing of the seas certainly failed to get a fair hearing. Portugal and Spain both sold their co-operation. To the Portuguese went a subsidy of £300,000 and forgiveness of the unpaid balance on a loan made during the war. The Spaniards got £400,000 in return for a promise, which they did not keep, to abolish the slave trade to their colonies after 1820. Both nations conceded the mutual right of search *north* of the Equator, a limitation that protected the slave trade to Brazil. The net result of these costly bargains was to shift the business south of the Equator, so far as Portuguese dealers were concerned, and to transfer the carrying trade across the ocean to the French flag.

Ultimately British diplomacy succeeded in making an impression. A series of right-of-search treaties was concluded during the 1830's, in which advantage was taken of the knowledge of the slave trade gained during the preceding years. To make the blockade of the coast

effective, it had to be an in-shore patrol. It was rare for the squadron to capture a vessel with slaves on board. Naval officers had to hold the power to search for slavers near the river mouths, where the loading took place, and to seize vessels on suspicion. The equipment of a slave ship was readily recognizable. the number of water casks on board, sufficient for a voyage of four to six weeks with a live cargo of five hundred slaves; the construction of the slave decks or platforms built around the sides of the vessel and above the hold, with a space of two feet between, enough for the poor wretches to remain in a sitting posture during the entire voyage; the quantity of shackles used to rivet each victim to the deck. If any doubt was left of the validity of this circumstantial evidence, the odor of a slave ship was enough to damn her. A naval patrol could be certain of its prospect's identity merely by getting on the lee side. Verily no officer long on the African station could mistake a slaver for a vessel bound on a lawful errand.

The treaties of the 1830's made the presence of suspicious equipment a valid cause for detention of a vessel. There were at least ten of these treaties, but the ones that counted were those with France and Spain. Slavers were wary of using the French flag after 1833. The Spanish treaty was effective enough according to appearances, but it was still no crime to land slaves in Cuba. Actually the volume and the cruelty of the slave trade were now worse than they had ever been before. Cuba in company with Brazil was forging ahead as the world's leading sugar producer; the business was based openly on the rapid turnover of slaves; and with characteristic venality Spanish officials in the island carried on a profitable squeeze play, while the disembarking and trading of slaves went on without interruption. After 1835 slavers found the Portuguese flag their most convenient refuge, since Portugal refused the addition of the equipment article to her treaty and since the original agreement did not apply south of the Equator. Empty promises to co-operate eventually wore down British patience, and the British government is hardly to be reproached for doing arbitrarily what it had repeatedly offered the Portuguese the chance to perform themselves. Brazil having declared her independence and having been recognized by Britain, the Portuguese no longer had the excuse for protecting the slave trade to their colonies. An Act of Parliament in 1839 authorized the seizure of slavers found henceforth south of the Equator, and, confronted with this inexorable stand, Portugal belatedly made a virtue of necessity and conceded the treaty for the lack of which she had long been humored.

It goes without saying that neither Portugal nor any of the other treaty powers meant to assume responsibility for their share of the work of suppressing the detestable traffic. None exhibited a humanitarian interest, and none offered to explore the possibilities of Lord Castlereagh's original plan for an international maritime police. During the same period the British constantly maintained a patrol-squadron off the African coast. In number of ships and guns the squadron was pretentious enough, but in efficiency it was far from ideal. It was customary for the Admiralty to assign its oldest and slowest frigates to the job, and they proved a poor match for the speedier slavers built especially for the African service. One slave captain boasted he could sail thrice around any frigate on the station and stay out of range. In such circumstances it is hardly surprising that the naval officers were none too zealous, and it was more often than otherwise a piece of pure luck for a cruiser to intercept a slaver. This lackadaisical attitude underwent a change in 1839 with the appointment of a first-rate officer, Commander Denman, who recommended alterations in the squadron and in the techniques of cruising. What was really needed to make the service efficient was a patrol by small, fast sailing vessels. At the same time the influence of Lord Palmerston at the British Foreign Office began to have its effect upon the Admiralty. Palmerston proved himself a tireless missionary in the cause of antislavery. The year 1839 therefore suggests a turning-point in the history of the African slave trade in that the events associated with it indicated a greater efficiency in the campaign to suppress the traffic.

Having described the main features of the maritime police system in both conception and practice, we now turn to the chief problem of this chapter: the failure of the United States, in spite of its prohibitory law of 1807, to make common cause with the British in the suppression of the slave trade. It is the naked truth that the chief fruit of the treaty system after 1839 was, not to kill the traffic, but to drive it under the American flag, virtually the last refuge from interception by British cruisers. Nay, worse, the slave trade gained a reputation for greater barbarism and volume between 1840 and 1860 than ever previously. In the decade before the American Civil War the average number of victims transported across the "Middle Passage"—the route followed by the slave ships from the Gulf of Guinea to the West Indies—was fifty thousand a year. Some of the vessels were clippers built in New England yards and sold knowingly to Spaniards, Portuguese, and Brazilians for use in the slave trade. "Citizens of the United States are constantly in this capital,"

reported the American minister from Rio de Janeiro in 1850, "whose only occupation is the buying of American vessels with which to supply the slave importers. These men obtain sea-letters," he continued,

which entitle them to continue in use the United States flag, and it is this privilege which enables them to sell their vessels to the slave traders, deliverable on the coast of Africa at double, and sometimes more than double, the price for which they were purchased on the preceding day. The vessels take over slave goods and slave crews, under the protection of our flag, and remain nominally American property until a favorable opportunity occurs for receiving a cargo of slaves; and it is not infrequently the case that our flag covers the slaves until the Africans are landed upon the coast of Brazil.¹

Furthermore, the vessels carried double sets of papers and often two masters, an American and a Spaniard or Portuguese. The American flag and papers covered the eastbound voyage because they were a sure guaranty against seizure on suspicion; and because of the jealous attitude of the United States its flag at the masthead was likely to discourage a visit from an inquisitive British cruiser on the return voyage also. If the cruiser's commander persisted in making a visit anyway, the flag and the papers could always be thrown overboard at the last moment and Portuguese or Spanish nationality assumed instead. There was a good reason for this dodge: American law carried the death penalty for slaving, and British commanders were known to turn over their American captures to American cruisers. There were even cases on record where slavers caught red-handed were sent direct to an American home port with a British prize crew in charge. We are unable to record, however, a single conviction and execution of an American slave dealer until the year 1862. British law, in contrast, was singularly merciful toward the slave captain and crew. The mixed court, sitting at Freetown, Sierra Leone, could do no more than confiscate the captured vessel and free the victims. Captain and crew were released to find their way back to their foul trade.

Perseverance on the part of the British government in attempts to win American co-operation met with indifferent success. So nationalistic a statesman as John Quincy Adams rejected Castlereagh's idea of an international police out of hand. Prodded by a House of Representatives anxious to do something against the slave trade,

¹ From unpublished dispatches to the State Department quoted in Lawrence F. Hill, *Diplomatic Relations between the United States and Brazil* (Durham, N.C., 1932), p. 129.

however, Adams retreated to the extent of offering a piracy convention. Making the slave trade piracy under international law would denationalize it. A slaver thus caught by any warship would be open to punishment as an enemy of mankind. The method fell short of the certainty furnished by a simple mutual right of search treaty, because a boarding officer had to be sure whom he was visiting. If a British officer mistook an American vessel bound on a lawful errand, he was subject to reprimand. The point is that the United States claimed an absolute immunity for its ships on the high seas but did not argue that all ships had the privilege of hoisting American colors: any pirate could do that, if he thought he could the better protect himself.

The proposed piracy convention was a substitute for accomplishing clumsily and inefficiently what could the more easily be done through a simple exchange of the right to stop and search each other's vessels when they were under suspicion within the proscribed area. The United States did send a cruising squadron to African waters in 1820, the squadron captured a number of vessels which the commander was sure were American-owned but proved so completely covered by Spanish papers that he had to release them. Clearly the United States had no choice but to enter a general convention if progress was to be made. But even the piracy convention fell through. It had been drafted in order to cover operations in Caribbean waters as well as African, the intention being to put a double check on slavers and arrest them near their destination if they had escaped from the other side. Under the influence of Southern opinion the Senate rejected this part of the agreement, and the British government, having meanwhile altered its own law so as to make the slave trade piracy, refused to ratify the amended convention. This decision appears to have been a case of too much haste, since Adams had offered to let the cruisers of the two nations pair off together and exchange information. The piracy convention might have been exploited as the beginning of maritime co-operation by two jealous rivals; and a wise British statesman with the stature of Castlereagh might well have turned it to good account. But George Canning, Castlereagh's successor at the Foreign office, was as nationalistic and as ill-disposed to co-operate as Adams.

To be sure, not all the blindness and obstinacy were on the American side. Adams had demanded a convention on impressment as the first step toward American co-operation against the slave trade, but even Castlereagh was deaf to this proposal. If Britain altered her attitude on this question, it was thought she would weaken her

own organic law. No British government could command support at home in favor of the change. The United States raised the question again in 1842, and met with a rebuff from a British administration notoriously trying to be conciliatory. Britain's refusal to concede this point (though she never revived impressment in practice) proved a chronic stumbling-block to Anglo-American co-operation. The two issues were not really related, especially if we keep in mind the implications of Lord Castlereagh's plan for an international police; but in practical American politics it was impossible to by-pass the impressment problem, just as it was out of the question to make any progress with it in practical British politics.² Bitter memories of the impressment right as abused during the Napoleonic wars lacerated American feelings, and the issue long continued the symbol of British tyranny on the seas. President Monroe, more sympathetic than Adams with the project for suppressing the slave trade, ventilated the American fear in these words:

. . . If the *freedom* of the sea is abridged by compact for any new purpose, the example may lead to other changes. And if its operation is extended to a time of peace, as well as of war, a new system will be commenced for the dominion of the sea, which may eventually, especially by the abuses into which it may lead, confound all distinction of time and circumstances, of peace and of war, and of rights applicable to each state.³

Thus to the American mind there was a fundamental contradiction between freedom of the seas and the right of search. Even the point that the latter was to be mutual failed to make a decisive impression. Daniel Webster put the doubt a little more explicitly twenty years later when he objected "that the whole police of the sea, so to speak, would naturally fall into the hands of one leading maritime state."⁴ The objection was more theoretical than real, however, as Webster demonstrated by his own actions. In the hands of friendly administrators and co-operative naval officers American policy could be made to team with the British, as we shall see. But exactly the opposite course could be followed, too, when a jealous or a timid

² See Part III, chapter 49, for the treatment of the impressment question. The British government never in so many words yielded on this issue, but its recognition in the Treaty of Washington in 1870 of the right of a subject to alienate his allegiance made the legal principle obsolete. Actually the principle of impressment was only an injurious relic after 1815, as stated above.

³ J. Q. Adams, *Works*, VII, 505, note. Monroe himself italicized the word *freedom*.

⁴ This was said confidentially to the British minister in Washington. Quoted by Hugh G. Soulsby, *The Right of Search and the Slave Trade in Anglo-American Relations, 1814-1862* (Baltimore, 1933), pp. 91-92.

administration was at the helm. In that case American policy fell little short of outright obstructionism. As in other fields, it became the familiar child of sectional conflict in the United States. Fanaticism in the domestic slavery quarrel naturally reacted on the issue of suppressing the international slave trade; and, as the Manifest Destiny spirits of the West dreamed of new worlds to conquer, they too had their reasons for feeding upon the ancient grudge against England. Westerners and Southerners were ready to choke before they would admit a good reason for co-operation on anything.

Meanwhile under the vigorous guidance of Lord Palmerston British pressure on the slave trade had steadily increased during the 1830's. Determined to check the growing fraud of national flags, the cruising squadron resorted to *visiting* suspected vessels. The commander wanted to find out by the papers whether or not the vessel was really what she pretended to be. If she belonged to a nationality that was not a party to the treaty system of search, he had to let her go. There was nothing particularly novel or alarming about the practice. It was a necessary procedure in any campaign against common piracy on the high seas, and it is precisely what was intended by the proposed piracy convention of 1824. Actually American naval commanders did the same thing; they frequently visited suspicious vessels in Caribbean waters and were no strangers to the practice on the African station. And yet, for reasons of its own, the Navy Department kept the knowledge of this fact to itself.

There was, however, a Lieutenant Paine on the African station who was eager to do his part in destroying the slave trade. Paine made an agreement in 1840 with the British commander whereby each was to detain vessels flying American colors, when found to be equipped for and engaged in the slave trade. Then, if really proved to be American property, the British commander would deliver the ship to any American cruiser; or, if the vessel turned out to be Spanish, Portuguese, Brazilian, or British property, the British squadron was to take her in charge. Unfortunately a pro-Southern Secretary of State had just been challenging the British right to visit, and Paine's agreement was flatly repudiated. It revived two years later in the hands of Daniel Webster, who hoped to accomplish something. The occasion was Webster's negotiation in Washington with Lord Ashburton, which terminated in an important treaty covering various problems in Anglo-American relations. The Webster-Ashburton Treaty provided that each government should maintain on the coast of Africa a squadron of not less than eighty guns for the suppression of the slave trade, that each squadron should be independent

of the other, but that the commanders should consult together with a view to acting in concert. The argument fell short of the ideal; it was not the number of guns but types of vessels best able to cope with the slavers that counted on the African station. Nevertheless, it was the best evidence found of mutual co-operation that had yet appeared, and Webster meant what he said. He got Lieutenant Paine to write a report, which was to be made the foundation of American cruiser policy in the future. In Paine's report occurred this paragraph:

We are of opinion that a squadron should be kept on the coast of Africa to co-operate with the British, or other nations interested in stopping the slave-trade; and that the most efficient mode would be for vessels to cruise in couples, one of each nation. (with an understanding that either of the cruisers may examine a suspicious vessel so far as may be necessary to determine her *national* character; while any further search would be only pursued by the vessel having a right from the laws of nations or from existing treaties.)⁵

Webster did not feel strong enough politically to air these views before Congress, but he communicated them confidentially to Lord Ashburton. When the latter returned to London he went with the conviction that the American government now really meant business. Unhappily, however, the joint-squadron agreement, and particularly the British right of visit, offered too good an opportunity for unfriendly politicians to miss. A Western move to strike out the appropriations in Congress for the African squadron failed, but the right of visit raised a cloud of legal verbiage which effectively blunted the will to act in concert. The British freely admitted they had no right to visit an American vessel as such; but they declared they had a right to find out if the vessel really was American. Nothing can be more transparent than that the flag at the masthead is not *ipso facto* proof of the nationality of the vessel; and in an area infested with pirates or slavers, how could a naval officer escape being imposed upon unless he boarded the suspect?

Blown by winds of fear, jealousy, and sectional hatreds during the 1840's and 1850's, successive American administrations developed a genius for obstructionism and inefficiency. When the British found a vessel that was committing a fraud on the American flag, the American government generally had nothing to say. But when, as happened frequently, the boarding officer was confronted by two sets of papers, one of them false, the American authorities were dis-

⁵ Miller, *Treaties*, IV, 440-41.

posed to argue, even when the vessel was a proved slaver. Lewis Cass of Michigan, Secretary of State in the Buchanan administration, was especially good at keeping up a running fire of fault-finding. Furthermore, the American squadron on the African station was rarely kept at treaty strength; and, judging by the peculiar wording of the instructions given to the commanders, it was sent there to watch the British rather than to catch slaves. In spite of this hypocrisy at home, however, there were conscientious and able American naval officers who knew what they were there for, and under them there appears to have been as much practical co-operation with the British as circumstances would permit. The point is that nothing could be done openly or honestly, that repeated recommendations from the officers in charge went unheeded, and that each commander had to take the responsibility for cutting through the tangle of contradictions that distinguished his orders from Washington. In the circumstances it is not to be wondered at that the slave trade descended to the lowest depths of cruelty and wickedness during this period.

How hollow were all the fears and protests, and how easy it was to demonstrate that where there was a will there was also a way, may be judged from the results obtained during the four years of the American Civil War, when the United States decided to co-operate. Anxious to play up to British antislavery opinion, William H. Seward told the British minister the Lincoln administration would have "none of the squeamishness" (the expression was his) characteristic of past American administrations in the matter of visit and search. This naturally called for a proposal from London to sign a mutual right-of-search treaty. But Seward had a reason for desiring appearances to be otherwise—the treaty would get a better reception in the Senate if presented as one made in America. The British readily played the game, and so the treaty, really drafted and printed in London, went to the Senate as Seward's brain-child. With the unanimous approval of that body President Lincoln ratified the treaty on April 25, 1862. It contained all of Lord Castlereagh's original ideas, plus the improvements that had developed with experience. The mutual right of search functioned in both African and Cuban waters, the presence on board of suspicious equipment was enough to convict a vessel, and for condemnation proceedings the treaty provided three mixed courts, at Freetown, Capetown, and New York, respectively. An amendment to the treaty widened the area of search in Caribbean waters the following year.

On the African coast the honeymoon period between the two

nations began in 1861; and Mr. Adams, the American minister in London, was writing thank-you notes to the Foreign Office for the aptitude shown by British cruisers in intercepting American slavers. A single corvette of the American Navy shared the task of breaking up the business during the war years. Brazil had previously begun to enforce her laws against the landing of slaves on her soil, and Spain too turned over a new leaf during the war. The estimated number of slaves smuggled into Cuba dropped from 30,473 in 1859-60 to 143 in 1864-65, and five years later the mixed courts, never having had any business on their dockets, were dissolved. The whole experience suggests a useful lesson in the problem of an international police of the seas. For an effective police system the right of search was an indispensable instrument. It was a great pity it survived so long in the American mind as a device of British tyranny.

PART II

Expansion and the Concept of Manifest Destiny

INTRODUCTION

THE EXPANSION of the United States in North America is the sequel to the footholds gained by the English colonists of the seventeenth century along the Atlantic Coast between Massachusetts and South Carolina. Two other areas of settlement in the "New World" were planted by Englishmen during the same century: one along the southern fringes of Hudson Bay, and the other among the islands and coasts of the Caribbean, where leverage was secured against the trade monopoly of the Spanish empire. Originally the Spaniards had presumed to claim the whole continent; but fiction rapidly yielded to fact, and in the course of the century they admitted the several claims of the French, English, and Dutch, wherever these three nationalities had actually settled. The English eliminated the Dutch from the mainland, and made several efforts, by both war and diplomacy, to settle their rivalries with the French. Two long intercolonial wars ensued between 1689 and 1713 paralleling struggles of equal length and greater intensity in Europe. In general, the French and the Spanish acted together against the English in America, just as they did in the Old World, and they continued their alliance against the common rival long into the eighteenth century. But at the Peace of Utrecht, which closed the War of the Spanish Succession in 1713, the three powers made a serious effort to divide their interests and partition the continent of North America in such a way as to promote a long peace.

The principle naturally followed at Utrecht was to leave wide areas of wilderness separating the territories of the three powers in the belief that each would find and keep to the natural limits of its expansion. Nova Scotia was the sole exception, where French and English were in relatively close contact, and the failure to agree upon an exact boundary there furnished recurrent cause for trouble. Much to the annoyance of the people in Massachusetts, the French retained a strategic corridor through from Quebec to the Bay of Fundy, and strengthened their influence with the Indians of the

Maine woods. But elsewhere there appeared to be ample elbow room for all three. The English colonies still hugged the coast in 1713, and it seemed hardly conceivable that they would ever expand beyond the watershed of the Alleghenies. This was assumed to be their natural western boundary. The French sphere of activity on its part stretched in a long thin line of trading posts from Montreal westward along the shores of the Great Lakes to Detroit, and thence south following the Wabash River through the Illinois country and down the Mississippi. The concept of a great inland empire, taking in all of the valleys of the rivers draining into the Mississippi from both east and west, was French, but in 1713 neither they nor the British had explored the headwaters of the Ohio. The British had already driven a potential salient into their territory, however, through a contact established with the Iroquois Indians of western New York; and in 1721, through the influence of Governor Burnet of New York and Governor Spotswood of Virginia, the Board of Trade adopted a plan for fortifying the passes of the Alleghenies and extending a line of forts as far west at Lake Erie. Burnet established the first firm foothold west of the mountains at Oswego, on Lake Ontario, and with their flank thus threatened, the French countered with a wide encircling movement south from the St. Lawrence and east from the Mississippi in the hope of holding the British to their mountain barrier. A similar scramble for strategic positions occurred in the southwest, where the British successfully planted the colony of Georgia on land that was nominally Spanish. The principle of a tripartite partition of the continent, tacitly accepted at Utrecht, was more French than British, and the Board of Trade virtually rejected it in 1721. A mutual interest in the fur trade, and especially in the acquisition of wild lands west of the mountains suitable for future settlement, cemented the interests of the colonies and the mother country more and more closely together.

Belatedly realizing the danger of this westward movement to their own flar-flung empire, the French made a final effort after 1749 to hold the line of the Alleghenies; and the result was a decisive conflict in which the British broke through the French defenses all along the line from the Gulf of St. Lawrence to the mouth of the Mississippi. In 1763 the continent was redivided; with their empire of the St. Lawrence in British hands, including now everything from Hudson Bay to the Gulf of Mexico, and with the Spanish Floridas also a part of the spoils of war, the French resigned their claims to New Orleans and the west bank of the Mississippi to the Spaniards and left the mainland. The Mississippi thenceforth met

the British idea of a natural boundary on the west, though fur traders from Montreal were not long in adopting the French dream of an expanding empire up the Missouri Valley

To this British legacy of empire the United States partially succeeded at the end of the Revolution. It had the Mississippi River as its western boundary. But in many respects its real position was more comparable to that which the British had held at the middle of the century. It was a loose confederacy of seaboard states, facing the possibility of indefinite confinement east of the Appalachian watershed. The British continued to enjoy all of the advantages of the old French route into the interior, and the Spaniards had won repossession of the Floridas. Nevertheless, the dominant American idea was a revival of the concept that was realized in 1763; a consolidated empire extending from Hudson Bay to the Gulf, with freedom to make thrusts farther west into the trans-Mississippi country. Great Britain's possession of Nova Scotia and Canada identified her as a permanent enemy and rival for the mastery of the continent; and hostility toward the Spaniards was voiced in repeated assertions of a right bestowed by nature on Americans to navigate the western rivers to the sea

This heritage of ideas may be traced through the convictions held by men like John Adams and Benjamin Franklin, both of whom backed the war against France in 1755 and shared the feeling during the Revolution that the British, like the French before them, must leave the continent. And while preoccupied with the immediate problems of securing the trans-Appalachian country after the Revolution and of getting the Spaniards to open the Mississippi, the leaders were not blind to the larger issue. Jefferson's vision extended through to the Pacific Northwest as early as 1783. It was a question who would gain control of the Missouri route first, the British or the Americans, and Jefferson urged George Rogers Clark, the Kentucky leader, to explore the Missouri. It was twenty years, however, before the expedition having this as its objective could be undertaken.

Thus "manifest destiny" in the form of transcontinental expansion was given birth even before the Revolution. But it is by no means clear that the leaders were so optimistic as to identify a movement of population that they felt to be inevitable with the expansion of the United States as a *single nation*. Even Jefferson appears to have been moved by the old colonial concept of separate communities migrating westward and breaking off from the parent state. In 1786 he wrote:

Our present federal limits are not too large for good government. . . Our confederacy must be viewed as the nest, from which all America, North and South, is to be peopled. We should take care too, not to think it for the interest of that great continent to press too soon on the Spaniards. Those countries cannot be in better hands. My fear is that they are too feeble to hold them until our population can be sufficiently advanced to gain it from them piece by piece. The navigation of the Mississippi we must have. This is all we are as yet ready to receive.¹

This is cryptic language, which seems to suggest that the United States would succeed as a federal state only as far as the Mississippi. For some time Jefferson continued to talk in terms of the multiplication table but not in terms of union. To John Jacob Astor he opined that descendants of the first settlers on the Pacific Coast would "spread themselves through the whole length of that coast, covering it with free and independent Americans, unconnected with us but by ties of blood and interest."²

Unchallenged control of the Mississippi was the prerequisite for transcontinental expansion. Hence the decisive importance of the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, which gave the United States more than Jefferson had anticipated. France was now eliminated from the continent and the Spaniards were isolated along the narrow coast of the Floridas. Jefferson lost no time in making a thrust in the direction of Oregon and in urging upon the Spaniards the old French claim to the Rio Grande as the southwestern boundary of the Louisiana territory. But he and his successors continued for some years to be more interested in consolidating the American empire east of the Mississippi. The next logical step, in his view, was to take the Floridas, followed by Cuba, which strategically he regarded as an appendage to the American coast. Its possession would insure the safety of the approach to the Mississippi and incidentally give the United States a free hand in crowding the Spaniard farther west.

Elsewhere we have noted the expression of a sentiment that all of North America belonged by natural right to the United States. Apparently the self-confident nationalism born of the War of 1812 fathered this sentiment. It was John Quincy Adams who linked it with the idea of fencing off the continent from further European colonization. Adams follows Jefferson as the next great interpreter of manifest destiny, and he indicates a greater faith in the ability of the Union to expand and hold together, as distinct from the spread of population. Like Jefferson, Adams was mindful of Cuba,

¹ Jefferson, *Writings*, (Ford ed.), IV, 188-89

² *Ibid.*, IX, 351

whose future annexation he was willing to leave to the operations of natural law. "There are laws of political as well as of physical gravitation," he asserted, "and if an apple severed by the tempest from its native tree cannot choose but fall to the ground, Cuba, forcibly disjoined from its own unnatural connection with Spain, and incapable of self-support, can gravitate only towards the North American Union, which by the same law of nature cannot cast her off from its bosom."⁸

As a practical statesman, Adams violated his own sentiment by entering into a series of agreements with Britain, Spain, and Russia, which partitioned the continent. The treaties were of immense advantage to the United States; they eliminated Spain from the Floridas and Britain from all share of the Mississippi Valley, and they insured the United States a corridor through Oregon to the Pacific Coast. And though the Spanish treaty bore the earmark of finality in excluding the United States from the Southwest, Adams seems to have reserved this area merely for future negotiation. As President, he attempted to bargain Mexico into retiring from Texas.⁴

Eventually Texas gave point to the Jeffersonian concept of a spreading population. Americans would colonize the continent, and through the patriotism of its emigrants the United States would taste the ripe fruits of manifest destiny. The annexation of the Texan Republic in 1845 vitalized the movement for sweeping across the continent; and "manifest destiny," now coined as a phrase by an Irish editor of a Democratic magazine in New York, entered its most aggressive stage. Fired by an ardent band of Democrats who described themselves as "Young America," public opinion boiled up on the subject of driving Great Britain from the continent and an-

⁸ Adams, *Writings* (Ford ed.), VII, 373.

⁴ The contrast in the later experience with this boundary in the Southwest and that made with Great Britain delimiting the Louisiana country at the forty-ninth parallel on the north is very striking. To all appearances both the Southwest boundary and the Northern boundary were intended to be permanent. But Adams did not mean them to be so. He counted on the future ability of the United States to colonize the entire continent, or at least all of it that was fit for settlement. The transcontinental treaties were to him only tentative agreements. Events to follow would sooner or later force a revision of both.

Adams proved a good prophet in the case of the treaty boundary with Spain. It was obliterated in less than thirty years. But the treaty boundary with Britain remained fixed, and, contrary to his expectations, British colonies did develop north of the forty-ninth. Eventually these colonies joined the Dominion of Canada, whose evolution as a transcontinental nation occupying the northern half of the continent Adams did not foresee. See Richard W. Van Alstyne, "New Viewpoints in the Relations of Canada and the United States," *Canadian Historical Review*, XXV (1944), 109-30.

nexing everything as far south at least as Panama, absorbing Cuba and perhaps South America, intervening in Europe for the purpose of establishing republics there, and extending the sway of the United States across the Pacific. The decade after 1845 saw such widespread but none the less related activities as the Oregon fever, the war with Mexico, the agitation to annex Cuba and Hawaii, the movement to acquire control of Central America, popular mass meetings to help the Hungarian revolutionists against the Habsburgs, and the expedition of Commodore Perry to open up Japan. Judging by the exuberance voiced by such popular newspapers as the *New York Herald* and the *Democratic Review* and by such influential senators as Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois, the United States in the 1850's was about to go on a conquering spree that would lay the world at its feet. The Mexican War threatened to develop into a movement to take all of Mexico, and throughout the succeeding decade broad sections of public opinion openly supported the expeditions organized by filibusters against the neighboring lands of the Caribbean. These were a form of private warfare carried on for the "liberation" of Cuba and the Central American countries; but they seemed to be carrying out the purposes of manifest destiny.

Actually there was more sound than substance in this popular clamor. Responsible leadership showed a disposition to compromise and to feel its way, and consciously avoided venturing on any widespread scheme of conquest. A victim of the Oregon fever, Polk nevertheless was content to partition the territory with Britain, and though he toyed with the idea of keeping all of Mexico, the President awoke to the dangers of sectional bitterness that the question threatened to precipitate. The war had barely begun in 1846 when David Wilmot of Pennsylvania introduced his famous proviso in the Senate prohibiting the introduction of slavery into any of the territories to be taken from Mexico. In spite of its brave front, the spirit of "manifest destiny" ran increasingly afoul of the sectional hatreds between North and South that dated from the Texas question. That former stalwart of continental manifest destiny, John Quincy Adams, was firmly in the abolitionist camp, a bitter foe of the "slave power," whom he accused of forcing the annexation of Texas. After the Mexican War wrangles in Congress over the question of slavery in the territories already gained were incessant; civil war raged in Kansas in 1856, and how domestic party politics would have reacted to further additions to the national territory, had they been accomplished during the 1850's, must be left to the imagination. From Polk to Buchanan the most persistently

desired territory on the part of the administrations was Cuba; the apple was now thought ripe for plucking; but the South frankly advertised its hope of making at least one, and perhaps two additional slave states out of the island.

In short, "manifest destiny," while exhibiting a truculent spirit of aggression, revealed fatal weaknesses in American imperialism and expended itself largely in talk. Its most pugnacious spirits loved to express themselves in terms of national hyperboles, and to dilate upon certain grand ideas concerning the future triumphs of American Republicanism, but none of them paused to think out a working plan by which the Habsburg monarchy in Central Europe was to be destroyed, Great Britain vanquished on the seas, the peoples of Spanish America absorbed into the American Union and made voters, and the mastery of the Pacific Ocean assured. Least of all was Congress alert to the relationship between sea power and territorial expansion, and the Senators from the interior who preached "manifest destiny" in the loudest tones consistently voted against naval reform. Franklin Pierce, who considered himself the "discreet representative" of Young America, attempted a mild form of education of Congress on the need for a modern Navy. Without a naval force, declared his Secretary of the Navy, mere coastal fortifications were like a "shield without a sword." At that time the American Navy consisted of about seventy ships, of which many were beyond repair and the rest were obsolete. The Crimean War in the Black Sea demonstrated the vulnerability of the old sailing vessel and the need for ironclad steam warships, but the United States paid no attention.

Nevertheless, there was in this period of sheer animal energy, stretching through twenty years, a recognizable trend toward the systematic expansion of national power. Texan annexation made it a certainty that the United States would be a transcontinental state. Texas opened the road to Mexico and California. British diplomacy had attempted to halt American expansion at the borders of Texas and build up that republic as a buffer. Once the issue was decided, however, there was nothing for Great Britain to do but agree to the division of Oregon and leave Mexico to the tender mercies of President Polk. British statesmen feared that the United States would threaten their interests in the Caribbean and the Pacific, and reach down into South America, British agents in Central America urged their government to build up its power and expand its territorial holdings on the Central American coast. It would then be in a position to keep the United States at arm's length from the Isthmus and the inner Caribbean. But Great Britain had no intention

of making an issue with the United States; and she again compromised with this country in 1850 by recognizing American equality of right to use the Isthmus as a passageway, and by a joint pledge against territorial or other aggressions in Central America. Even so, there continued to be anxious moments in the relations of the two countries during the decade. The balance of power in the Caribbean remained firmly in British hands; Britain had the naval force and the necessary island positions with which to make it good, had she chosen. Filibusters like William Walker, who overran Nicaragua and for a while received a steady stream of reinforcements from New York, pointed to trouble. Walker made a jest of the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty of 1850, and converted Central America into a scene of anarchy. The British cabinet secretly debated the advisability of using naval power to destroy him but could reach no decision. Walker was too popular in the United States, where he was regarded as the standard bearer of "manifest destiny"; and Franklin Pierce, who was eagerly searching for a way to evade the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty, concealed his sympathies for the filibuster with difficulty.⁵

The Mexican War speeded American interest in Cuba, less as a protective shield to the American coast than as a stepping-stone to power in the Caribbean. Every administration but one in the interval between the Mexican War and 1861 tried to get the island. And despite the entanglement of the annexation question with sectional politics, the underlying issue was the strategic importance of Cuba. Edward Everett of Massachusetts, Secretary of State under Fillmore, pointed this out in 1852. His was the most dignified defense of the concept of "manifest destiny" set forth since the age of John Quincy Adams. Knowing that this pro-Northern administration was indifferent to Cuban annexation, the British and French governments had hoped to persuade it to enter a pact with them never to seek possession of the island. This proposed Tripartite Treaty was intended to do the same thing for Cuba that the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty had accomplished for Central America—insulate the island against American annexationism. After considerable deliberation the administration rejected the proposal. The United States, wrote Everett,

would, by the proposed convention, disable themselves from making an acquisition which might take place without any disturbance of existing foreign relations, and in the natural order of things. The island of Cuba lies at our doors. It commands the approach to the Gulf of Mexico,

⁵ Filibustering receives attention in this book in Part III, pp. 704-6, below

which washes the shores of five of our States. It bars the entrance of that great river which drains half the North American continent, and with its tributaries forms the largest system of internal water-communication in the world. It keeps watch at the doorway of our intercourse with California by the Isthmus route. If an island like Cuba, belonging to the Spanish crown, guarded the entrance of the Thames and the Seine, and the United States should propose a convention like this to France and England, those powers would assuredly feel that the disability assumed by ourselves was far less serious than that which we asked them to assume.*

Everett's state paper stood for the national point of view, implicit in American foreign policy since Jefferson, that Cuba bore a permanent relationship to the United States that was not to be confused with sectional questions. Moreover, this Whig administration, cool toward territorial acquisitions, was determined to keep abreast of the British in the scramble for the China trade. It sent Commodore Perry to anticipate the other powers in opening Japan, by force if necessary, and thus clear a passageway to North China. Jealous of the valuable British island station of Hong Kong, Perry wanted the United States to get a stranglehold on Japan and the North China coast. To do so, he favored the seizure of the Bonin Islands, Formosa, and the Loo Choos, and preparations for a war with the British for the mastery of the Pacific. The American government repudiated these ambitions but kept step with the other powers in gaining the same treaty rights in China.

It is easy to bracket Manifest Destiny with the so-called westward movement of American emigrants by land, and to overlook the close interrelationship with the maritime interests of the country. Until after 1848 the Pacific Coast was regarded in terms of its connection with the sea. Both California and Oregon were coastal provinces, which formed part of the trade route to the Orient. The mountains and the deserts were the real barriers, while traders and emigrants reached the Coast freely by way of Cape Horn. The Columbia River, Queen Charlotte Sound, Russian Alaska, Monterey, the west coast ports of South America, the Hawaiian Islands, the Dutch East Indies, and China were all linked together in the common shipping lanes plied by Yankee vessels. Yankee migrations to Hawaii preceded American settlements in Oregon and California, and Honolulu was a thriving city when San Francisco was only a harbor. The American government announced its interest in the Islands four years

* 32d Cong., 2d sess., *Senate Executive Document 13*, pp. 15-23

before it divided Oregon with Great Britain; and it coveted the coasts and bays of California before the interior drew much attention. Furthermore, the Orient had always figured in the consideration of overland routes. Jefferson looked upon Oregon as the American window on the Pacific, and sent Lewis and Clark to find a land route that would shorten the road to China. The tradition persisted through the century: Seward, Douglas, and the other men of the 1850's who fought for a Pacific Railroad Bill had the Orient in mind, and the Union Pacific and Northern Pacific were both constructed after the Civil War as links with China.

We must remember also the direction that the Pierce administration attempted to give to Manifest Destiny. Pierce was interested in islands, and his scheme of expansion suggested a blueprint for an island and isthmian empire extending from Cuba to Hawaii. He wanted a naval base in Santo Domingo, and in 1854 he sent a commissioner to Hawaii to clinch an annexation bargain with the native king and his white advisers. With Walker applying the American multiplication table to Nicaragua, the links of empire from the Atlantic to the mid-Pacific would be complete. But the apples which Pierce thought so delicious failed to fall from the tree, and no amount of shaking, short of naked force, would bring them down. Pierce's policies were a display of tendencies—permanent tendencies—but they lacked an articulated program of action.

It fell to William Henry Seward, Lincoln's Secretary of State, to correlate the ideas of Manifest Destiny and to bring the lessons of sea power to bear upon the problems of expansion. Seward is the third great interpreter of Manifest Destiny, following in the footsteps of Jefferson and John Quincy Adams, and his plans reflected the new sense of national power that emerged from the victory of the Civil War. His gaze swept in the whole of North America, the islands of the Caribbean, Hawaii, Midway and Wake Islands in the Pacific, and the Orient. "The nation must command the empire of the seas, which alone is real empire," he declared. In the West Indies Seward worked to secure at least one naval base, preferably the Virgin Islands; but he was not indifferent to taking other bases in his stride. Alaska was his grand stroke: he bought it as a back door to Canada, hoping to detach the Northwest from the British flag and eventually stifle the nascent nationalism of the Dominion. But Alaska, with its Aleutian Islands, was also the bridge to Asia: it would insure the United States a positive share in the destinies of the Orient. Seward believed the treaty system that guaranteed equal rights in China was destined to fail. When he heard rumors of a

French punitive expedition against Korea, he believed the moment had come for partition and, not to be left out of the scramble, he secretly offered to co-operate with the French in the expedition.

With the exception of Alaska and Midway Island, Seward's plans fell short of achievement. Popular feeling refused to rise to his level and rejected specific opportunities for expansion. Canada was regarded as the ultimate objective in continental expansion, but it was classified as a ripening apple which would some day fall into the American lap. Even Seward favored waiting for it. An ugly quarrel with Great Britain sprang up a few years later over the latter's alleged unneutrality, and a group of continentalists in Congress exploited the emergency as a chance to obtain the cession of Canada. Even the extremists shrank from a war of conquest, however, and they overlooked the important factor of the attitude of the Canadian people themselves. Far from winning Canadian affection, these and later gestures of annexationism hardened the feeling of nationalism across the border and speeded the efforts of the Dominion to cement its own relations with the Pacific Coast. Preoccupied with the theory of the ripe apple, the American people continued to underestimate the strength of Canadian nationalism. They failed to grasp the fact that the boundary was permanent, and that the United States was not destined to absorb Canada. Annexation again became a sort of issue in 1911: a reciprocity agreement negotiated by President Taft inspired certain elements in the United States to sound off on the subject. The sentiment made little impression in the United States, but it brought swift repudiation from across the border. The ministry that had negotiated the treaty was turned out of office, and the treaty itself was rejected.

In the Caribbean and the Pacific the United States was unripe for the theory of sea power on which Seward rested his ideas of expansion. For thirty years the public continued indifferent; but steps in establishing outposts of American power went forward nevertheless. Fruitless efforts to secure anchorages in Santo Domingo and Haiti were made from time to time; Grant had his mind set on obtaining the base at Samaná Bay in Santo Domingo, and Blaine almost got a lease on the valuable harbor of Môle St. Nicholas in Haiti in 1891. Men inside the government grasped the relationship between these places and the question of an isthmian canal, but they were unable to make their policies effective. The public was far from indifferent to the ambition for an American-owned canal, but it refused to support a program of naked aggression in the Caribbean. In the mid-Pacific the government succeeded better: it established

sure footholds in Samoa in 1878 and in Pearl Harbor in 1887, thus partially filling in the outlines of naval power in the Pacific that Seward had already drawn. These preparations formed the quiet background for the Spanish-American War in 1898, as sequels to which came the establishment of naval supremacy in the Caribbean, the liberation of the United States from the restrictions of the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty, and the thrust into the Philippine Islands. The United States now had a maritime empire stretching from Cuba to the Philippines; and the concept of national power, vaguely drawn by Jefferson and partially filled in by Pierce and Seward, became a reality. From the Spanish-American War emerged four separate but interrelated policies: active participation in the politics of the Far East, the development of a program of benevolent imperialism in the Caribbean, the evolution of a closer association with the republics of South America, and the conscious co-ordination of American interests with those of Great Britain.

" Following the path blazed by Seward, Captain Mahan appeared during the 1890's as the fourth great interpreter of Manifest Destiny. Drawing upon British precedents and studying the foundations on which British world power had been built, Mahan was able to construct a theory of sea power and apply it to the United States. Like Alexander Hamilton, in the preceding century, the captain concentrated upon the importance of the Caribbean, the control of which was fundamental for the execution of American national policies. But Mahan departed from the hemispheric conception of power accepted by Hamilton, and discussed the Caribbean primarily in terms of a corridor through to the Pacific. He even advocated reducing the Monroe Doctrine and giving up its guaranty of support to the South American states below the Amazon, because they were outside of the effective range of American sea power. He declared: "For some time to come, to the full reach of the farthest view opened by present indications the world's general movement of assimilative progress will be, not north and south, but east and west; in both ways upon Asia, which now offers the greatest stimulant to all the tendencies that impel advance."

Mahan's chief frame of reference was the natural law of growth, which he deduced from the Darwinian theory of evolution. Self-preservation includes the right to grow, but it does not necessarily imply increase of size for nations, any more than it does for individuals, with whom bodily, and still more mental, development progresses long after stature has reached its limit; but it does involve the

right to insure by just means whatsoever contributes to national progress, and correlatively to combat injurious action taken by an outside agency, if the latter overpasses its own lawful sphere.⁷

True to the underlying traditions of Manifest Destiny, Mahan dwelt on the moral influence and place of leadership in the world that the United States must fill. It was a doctrine native to every expression of Manifest Destiny since the days of the founding fathers—the conviction that the United States was intended for a commanding place in the world. Mahan applied the concept to China. He was not an advocate of seizing additional territory, for the United States in 1900 had all that was necessary for it to fulfill its mission in the world. But he did believe there was fundamental agreement between the advancement of American markets in the Celestial Empire and the support of China's political independence. John Hay, Theodore Roosevelt, and William Howard Taft attempted to put Mahan's theories into practice.

The leading spirits of the twentieth century in American public life were the two Roosevelts and Woodrow Wilson, and they merely reiterated with some variations the faith of Alfred Thayer Mahan. Thirst for territory dropped from the program of Manifest Destiny after 1900, but thirst for the moral leadership of the world became the more ardent, once the United States had "arrived" as a world power. The keen appetite for China's markets turned partially sour after repeated frustrations during the decade before the First World War, but the desire to champion China's cause, to see her united as a nation and freed from the restrictions of foreign control, became more firmly fixed than ever. So long as this championship was buttressed by the treaty system, on which the principle of China's independence rested, its price was limited to diplomatic co-operation with the other powers. But after 1915 it had to be appraised in other terms: taking advantage of the war in Europe, Japan in that year disclosed her intention of reducing China to the level of a vassal state. Wilson frustrated the Japanese, and in 1921 the United States championed a collective agreement of nine powers to respect the independence and integrity of China. This insured a ten years' truce, but after 1931, with the subjugation of Manchuria accomplished, Japan barely gave lip service to the Nine-Power Treaty. The price for the American championship in China eventually proved to be war.

We have noted Mahan's comparative indifference to the Monroe Doctrine, his distrust lest, as a mere political abstraction, it would lead the United States into a clash with other powers over issues

⁷ Extracts from *The Problem of Asia* (Boston, 1900), pp. 30, 84.

not affecting its own vital interests. Mahan was correct in asserting that the Monroe Doctrine could not be made real without the use of a Navy, but so preoccupied was he with his theory of an east-west movement of men and goods converging upon Asia that he undervalued the historic connection with Latin America. That connection began to be markedly closer after 1900, and it must be correlated with the rise of the United States as a sea power.

In the Caribbean Manifest Destiny assumed the form of a benevolent despotism exercised over the small republics and an increasing concern for their economic exploitation at the hands of American capital. Commencing with a theory of trusteeship for the good behavior of the Caribbean republics, the concept flowered into a determination to teach Latin Americans how to improve their political system. Wilson displayed an extraordinary energy in this respect; and, though he repudiated any ambition for further territorial gain, no president was so determined to control the destinies of the Caribbean nations as he. Although the United States had little difficulty in cowing these petty nations, it aroused the enmity of Mexico and the South American republics, who were unable to make a distinction between Manifest Destiny and outright imperialism. Feeling the weakness of its position, the United States retreated from its role of policeman and schoolmaster; and, through a program of hemispheric solidarity skillfully adumbrated by Franklin D. Roosevelt, it managed to shift the emphasis to a principle of the collective interest of all the American nations in their defense and general welfare.

Woodrow Wilson proved to be the foremost moral preceptor of Manifest Destiny. Neglecting to emphasize the danger of German aggression, he framed American participation in the First World War in the idealistic terms of a crusade for democracy. Once more, as in many other instances, conceptions of Manifest Destiny were inextricably interwoven with ideas of national security. As remarked elsewhere, there is rarely a clear line of demarcation between the two sets of ideas. We can almost never say that the motivation of Manifest Destiny is formed without reference to the principle of security.

In the combined interests of American security and the promptings of Manifest Destiny Wilson founded the League of Nations, in which he confidently expected that the United States would play a leading part. The League was the ultimate expression of the precepts of Manifest Destiny; it was organized to temper and control the excessive nationalism which threatened the world with violence and anarchy. Actually the Covenant of the League recognized the con-

nection between physical force and the reign of law, it created ample machinery on paper for the employment of force against a lawless state. But Wilson, like Jefferson, his chief mentor, tended to emphasize the power of the moral influence; and he especially tried to influence his countrymen to remain loyal to the League as an association resting on moral rather than physical force. He tried to quiet their fears that the League meant an entangling alliance involving the danger of constant military action on the part of the United States. The flaw in the American position was that it aimed at the moral leadership of the world but was ill prepared for the necessary sacrifices to that end. Neither did it recognize in the League the tie that bound principles of security and Manifest Destiny together.

Furthermore, as advocates of disarmament Wilson and his contemporaries tended to contradict themselves. They made no distinction in principle between the victors and the vanquished at the end of the war, having disarmed the latter, they gave a vague pledge that the victorious powers would soon follow suit, with no clear reference to their special responsibility for maintaining the peace. Twenty years later, in the midst of the Second World War, the President of the United States and the Prime Minister of Great Britain in the Atlantic Charter sought to sidestep this error by pledging themselves to the disarmament of the enemy nations only. But in this and on other occasions in this war the United States has not failed to sound the note of manifest destiny. Franklin Roosevelt summed it up most succinctly in a bold message to Congress on January 6, 1941, denouncing this new and more odious German tyranny, pledging the United States to the defense of freedom, and declaring that

In the future days, which we seek to make secure, we look forward to a world founded upon four essential freedoms

The first is freedom of speech and expression—everywhere in the world

The second is freedom of every person to worship God in his own way—everywhere in the world.

The third is freedom from want—which, translated into world terms, means economic understandings which will secure to every nation a healthy peacetime life for its inhabitants—everywhere in the world.

The fourth is freedom from fear—which, translated into world terms, means a world-wide reduction of armaments to such a point and in such a thorough fashion that no nation will be in a position to commit an act of physical aggression against any neighbor—anywhere in the world.⁸

⁸ Jones and Myers, *Documents on American Foreign Relations*, III (Boston, 1941), 33.

CONTINENTAL EXPANSION

THE LOUISIANA PURCHASE was the signal for a forward movement which completed the continental limits of the United States in half a century. To these was added Alaska, by purchase from Russia in 1867. The sweep of the movement and the variety of forces at work are illustrated by the case studies in this section: (1) The Spanish Floridas, 1804-1814, (2) The Continental Partition Treaties, 1818-1825, (3) The Annexation of Texas, 1821-1845; (4) The Partition of Oregon, 1818-1846; (5) The Penetration and Conquest of California, 1840-1848; (6) Conquests of the Mexican War, 1846-1848; (7) Alaska and the Quest for Canada, 1867-1871

CHAPTER 31

THE SPANISH FLORIDAS, 1804-1814

THE SPANISH FLORIDAS were the buffer between the United States on the north and sundry European island possessions on the south.¹ They comprised a long, irregular coastline stretching eastward from the Mississippi and including, of course, the plump finger of land thrust southward toward Cuba. There was a somewhat artificial distinction between Florida East and Florida West. The line of division between them might be taken to be at either the Appalachicola or the Perdido River. The former was the boundary chosen by the British for administrative purposes in 1762, when they added the Floridas to their North American empire. The latter stream, on the other hand, had marked the easternmost extension of French influence along the Gulf Coast at a time before the Seven Years' War when French Louisiana had reached its ultimate limits.

¹ For the geography of this chapter, see the map facing p. 57.

Pensacola, which became the Spanish capital of West Florida after the separation from New Orleans in 1803, lay on the east bank of the Perdido at its mouth. About fifty miles separated it from the conventional boundary with the United States on the north. Somewhat to the west were the bay and town of Mobile, the latter chiefly French Creole in population and guarded by a small Spanish fort. Mobile, the most strategic point on the coast, served as an important complement to New Orleans as long as the two were under the same flag. Failure to get it included in the Louisiana Purchase lessened the value of that transaction to the United States. West of Mobile was vacant territory until one got beyond the Pearl River. In the bottom lands between this stream and the Mississippi, but north of Lake Pontchartrain, was the district of Baton Rouge, containing the largest and densest population in all the Floridas. Loyalist refugees from the American Revolution, escaped criminals and, after 1798, American immigrants from Mississippi Territory comprised the chief elements in this group of four or five thousand people. They were wedged in under the Spanish flag between United States territory to the north and south. Rage at not being included in the Louisiana Purchase took the form of outrages committed by border outlaws in this district in 1804.

East Florida proper was a strip of inhabited coast on the Atlantic, sixty miles long and twenty wide, between the St. Mary's River, the treaty boundary with the United States, and the town of St. Augustine. The population here was a medley of Spaniards, French, Germans, Americans, English, Indians, half-breeds, and fugitive slaves. In the hands of a strong maritime power the colony would have been of great importance as commanding the Bahama Channel, used by vessels in the Caribbean and Gulf trade. Amelia Island, at the mouth of the St. Mary's on the Spanish side, harbored a town of six hundred smugglers. This was Fernandina, ideally located for smuggling Negroes into Georgia and the neighboring American ports of Savannah and Charleston and taking cotton out. It also served as a vantage point for pirates and filibusters, and the Anglo-American element that dominated it had every reason to be contented with the Spanish regime. From the beginning of the American embargo and nonintercourse system in 1807 to the close of the War of 1812 Fernandina did a land-office business.

The description thus rounded out establishes the real character of the Floridas. They were not compact colonies, but a series of disjointed, isolated districts, each standing in a separate relation to the United States. They could not match the requirements of a

true buffer; the long, sprawling borderland possessed an infinite capacity for mischief and was utterly lacking in internal stability. Marauding Seminoles sallied forth at will across the border, to scalp and enrage the American families in the bottom lands of Georgia. The whole of the Spanish Empire, moreover, was in solution. Every colony but Cuba rebelled, and the Spanish Monarchy, itself driven to extremities by the invasions of Napoleon, rested its sole hope for survival in the military prowess of Great Britain. Furthermore, though Spain was finally restored to her independent national existence with the defeat of Napoleon, she nevertheless continued to lean helplessly, if sullenly, upon British goodwill. The most extraordinary circumstances therefore controlled the real status of the Floridas and made of them one of the principal questionmarks in American diplomacy during the period under review.

Mixed impulses and methods characterized the several American attempts to absorb this country. It was regarded as unfinished business, since the Floridas, more than the west bank of the Mississippi, had been the goal of the Louisiana diplomacy in 1803. The American minister in Paris, Mr. Livingston, who had carried the main burden of that diplomacy, argued that New Orleans was worthless without Mobile and that the latter point should be seized. To be sure, Mobile in the hands of a major power would have menaced the security of the Mississippi. When friction developed with Britain, the ally and protector of Peninsular Spain after 1808, there was some risk of this; but so long as the prostrate Spaniards remained in control unsupported, no part of the Floridas could seriously be regarded as jeopardizing the United States. The course of events indeed suggests that the reverse was true, the Spanish Floridas were helpless against American encroachment.

The United States had several strings to its bow. One of these was the claim, inherited from France, that *West Florida* belonged with the Louisiana Purchase. Prior to 1762 Mobile had been a French post, and French influence had prevailed as far east as the Perdido. Livingston, who was keenly conscious of the inadequacy of the Louisiana Purchase, argued this claim plausibly, and Jefferson adopted it. Its weak point lay in the fact that there had never been a treaty boundary between French Louisiana and Spanish Florida; Napoleon had intended to include West Florida in Louisiana after the treaty of retrocession in 1800, but Spain had resisted his demands. Thus the question was still an open one, but Jefferson prepared to make the utmost of it. Following in the footsteps of Napoleon, he desired the mastery of the entire Gulf Coast from East Florida

westward to the Rio Grande. He assumed that the limits of Louisiana were the Perdido on the east and the Rio Grande on the west. Like Livingston, however, he realized that West Florida was the vital segment of the coast, and he at first bent his efforts on bargaining the Spaniards out of it in exchange for a guaranty to them of the west bank of the Mississippi.

Congress lent its support by authorizing the President, at his own discretion, to treat West Florida as an integral part of United States territory. The Mobile Act of February 24, 1804, provided for the administration of the territory obtained from France *and also* "all the navigable waters, rivers, creeks, bays, and inlets lying within the United States, which empty into the Gulf of Mexico east of the River Mississippi." It empowered the President, moreover, "when-ever he shall deem it expedient, to erect the shores, waters, and inlets of the Bay and River Mobile, and of the other rivers, creeks, inlets, and bays emptying into the Gulf of Mexico east of the said River Mobile, and west thereof to the Pascagoula, inclusive, into a separate district. . . ."² This was conveniently vague language; when Jefferson was confronted with a Spanish protest, he side-stepped the issue by putting the center of the collection district at Fort Stoddert, just north of the treaty boundary, thereby implying, without saying, that Mobile was outside of the United States. Nevertheless, the Mobile Act remained in the presidential armory; seven years later it was used with effect.

The second string to the American bow was a possible deal with Napoleon whereby the latter would exert pressure on Spain to sell the Floridas outright to the United States. This proposal originated with Talleyrand, Bonaparte's wily minister, in Paris. The implication was that the money would ultimately find its way to Paris in the form of a Spanish subsidy. The European kaleidoscope changed before the details of this intrigue could be completed, however; Jefferson was willing to commit himself to its main outlines, but he waited too long over the question of a price. By 1806 the Emperor of the French had all of Central Europe at his feet and was preparing to overrun the Spanish Peninsula. Presumably he was no longer interested in bartering away the Spanish possessions.

Jefferson conceived of one other fleeting possibility in the final year of his presidency. Mobile was like a sore thumb, with the Spanish garrison collecting duties on American produce passing down the bay from the upper Tombigbee, and he was obviously

² *U.S. Statutes at Large*, II, 251-54

anxious to take it. His plan this time was "to seize to our own limits of Louisiana [West Florida] as of right, & the residue of the Floridas as reprisal for spoliations."¹ The spoliations referred to were part of the chronic offenses against American shipping that occurred in Spanish, as well as all other European waters, in those times of arduous struggle between Britain and Napoleon. For this daring coup, to be undertaken when the United States was unprepared for war, the President felt he would need the advance approval of Great Britain. He was also believed at the time to be interested in Cuba, which belonged with the Floridas in a common defense system. It was characteristic of Jefferson that he kept a close watch on his European fences and was ready to play one European power against another whenever, in his opinion, the advantage lay with the United States. The record shows that he intrigued with the French and the Spaniards on more than one occasion; he thought of doing the same with the British. He never actually did so with the latter, however, and he dropped his idea of seeking their support in 1807, probably because of the tense situation that developed between the two countries over the issue of neutral rights.

The best string to the American bow was the discontented population of the Baton Rouge district. Governor Claiborne of the adjacent Orleans Territory thought the people there ripe for rebellion in 1807, but Jefferson failed to seize the opportunity. Madison decided to take advantage of a similar crisis three years later. Through Governors Claiborne of the Orleans Territory and Holmes of the Mississippi Territory an agent was sent into the district to encourage the local inhabitants to arrange a convention which would request American intervention. Claiborne and Holmes worked out the details, the President having judiciously let them know that they had his support. A bloodless insurrection occurred in due course in West Florida in the summer of 1810, but instead of submitting at once to the United States, the members of the convention passed a declaration of independence and elected their own governor. They intended to establish an independent West Florida Republic, at least until such a time when they could get confirmation of their land titles from the American government, as well as guaranties against possible punishment for their former Loyalism. It will be recalled that many settlers in West Florida were originally refugees from the American Revolution. Actually there was a *de facto* West Florida Republic, embracing the land between the Mississippi and the Pearl,

¹ Jefferson, *Writings* (Ford ed.), IX, 203.

from November 29 to December 7, 1810. Holmes and Claiborne delayed no longer, but on the latter date converged their militia on Baton Rouge. They met with no resistance, and the country between the Mississippi and the Pearl automatically came under American jurisdiction. To justify its act the American government applied its original contention of 1804 that West Florida was really a part of Louisiana.

A second bite out of West Florida not long afterward took all the contested border land except the town of Mobile itself. Folch, the Spanish governor at Pensacola, apparently ready to give up the ghost, sent a tentative offer to President Madison. This prompted the latter to initiate a bold move to take *the whole* of the Florida coast, and, to be the more convincing, the President employed rumors of British designs on the coast. Congress accommodated with a secret act, January 15, 1811, which asserted that in view of "the influence which the destiny of the territory adjoining the southern border of the United States may have upon their security, tranquillity, and commerce, . . . the United States cannot, without serious inquietude, see any part of the said territory pass into the hands of any foreign Power." The act said nothing about the unappropriated portion of West Florida (this was already American soil according to the official view), but it authorized the President to take possession of the country *east* of the Perdido either with the consent of the authorities there or "in the event of an attempt to occupy the said territory, or any part thereof, by any foreign government."⁴ Additional measures passed in April 1812 divided West Florida at the Pearl River and assigned the western half to the new State of Louisiana and the eastern half to the Territory of Mississippi. Under these measures the American government occupied all but Mobile in the same month, and one year later dispatched a force which compelled the Spanish garrison at the latter point to evacuate. Although the United States was now at war with Great Britain, who for practical purposes held the Spanish Empire in pawn, it is not clear from the record that Mobile was seized as a safeguard against the British. The act appears to have been simply the consummation, at a convenient moment, of a long-standing, announced policy.

During the same months that this was going on an effort was being made to duplicate in East Florida the revolution that had successfully led to the incorporation of Baton Rouge in 1810. Fer-

⁴ Moore, *International Arbitrations*, V, 4519.

nandina was contented with its lot under Spain, but along the East Florida coast was a scattering of American stockmen and lumbermen who made good grist for an insurrection. Especially was there one John H. McIntosh, a lumberman and planter living on the banks of the St. John River. General George Mathews, a Georgian who well represented the people of his state in their appetite for Florida lands, was the agent selected by the Madison administration to prepare the necessary ground. Mathews garnered his recruits from the convenient American garrison at Point Petre, opposite Amelia Island, picked up some miscellaneous Georgians, and raised the flag of "revolt" on the Spanish side of the St. Mary's on March 13, 1812. He was joined in this by McIntosh and others who were living in East Florida; a republic was then proclaimed and McIntosh was elected its Director. The smugglers on Amelia Island surrendered when a few American gunboats put in an appearance, and the band of insurgents then marched south in the direction of St. Augustine. Mathews, like Claiborne, expected full support from Washington; but he reckoned without his host. In using soldiers in uniform from Point Petre to take part in the uprising, he failed in finesse; he embarrassed the administration, which faced a sharp division of opinion at home, and he was recalled for exceeding instructions.

The insurgents had meanwhile approached within two miles of St. Augustine, and both Madison and Monroe were reluctant to allow the prize to slip through their fingers. So were the people of Georgia. The administration found a temporary road out of its dilemma by commissioning the governor of Georgia to deal with the Spanish authorities at St. Augustine and to promise evacuation only if the latter would first pledge full amnesty for McIntosh and his fellow insurgents. This furnished latitude for delay and an opportunity to use the war with England as a pretext for annexing East Florida as well as Mobile. Madison's policies, however, aroused deep sectional emotions in the United States which canceled out hopes for expansion. While the South wanted the Floridas as the prize of war, a portion of the North had its eyes on Canada. The division of opinion was reflected even in the President's cabinet, where the Florida schemes were vigorously opposed by Albert Gallatin. A strictly sectional vote in the Senate in February 1813 repudiated the occupation of East Florida, and three months later the American forces were evacuated. Domestic politics, not the fortunes of war, had frustrated this intrigue.

West Florida, including Mobile, was kept because there the administration could justify itself by pointing to the Mobile Act, but

in the case of East Florida not even stories of its transfer to Great Britain made an impression on the opposition. The chronic weakness of East Florida was even more in evidence in the years following the war, however; Spanish rule rotted away, and the Spanish government admitted the fact by ceding the territory in 1819.

Did the United States acquire title to East Florida at a time and in a manner different from that to West Florida? It claimed to have title to the latter by virtue of the treaty with France in 1803, though the intrigues of Jefferson and Madison would suggest that they felt unsure of their footing. The United States took *de facto* possession of West Florida in three successive steps, 1810 to 1813. But the treaty of 1819 stipulated that the King of Spain "cedes to the United States . . . all the territories *which belong to him*, situated to the Eastward of the Mississippi, known by the name of East and West Florida."⁶ The question is, what territories did belong to the King of Spain in 1819? The words of the treaty satisfied national pride mutually, but, as Henry Adams so well puts it, "History cannot tell by what single title the United States hold West Florida."⁶

CHAPTER 32

THE CONTINENTAL PARTITION TREATIES, 1818-1825

BETWEEN 1818 and 1825 there were four major international agreements partitioning the North American continent. To three of these the United States was a party, the other powers being Great Britain, Spain, and Russia. The treaty with Russia in 1824, followed by a closely similar agreement between Great Britain and Russia in 1825, need not occupy us long. It annulled the famous ukase of 1821 whereby the Czar had proclaimed exclusive rights to the coast and adjacent waters as far south as the fifty-first parallel (a line drawn approximately across the northern tip of Vancouver Island), and confined Russia to the extreme northwest portion of the continent north of fifty-four forty. This and the companion British treaty (which differed from the American in that it drew

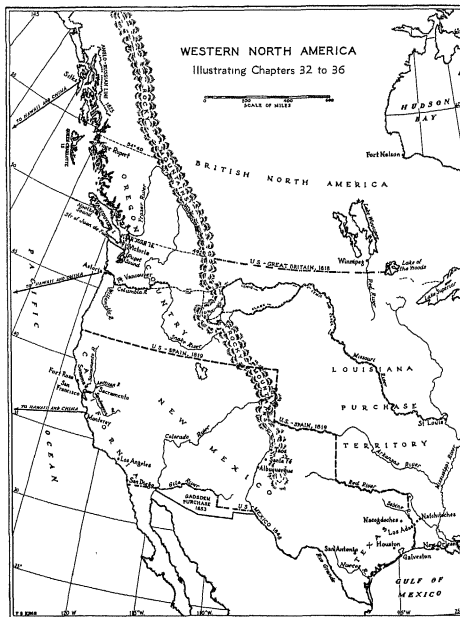
⁶ Miller, *Treaties*, III, 4.

⁶ *History of the United States*, VI, 237.

an eastern as well as a southern boundary for Alaska) implemented the Monroe Doctrine (or rather, Message) of 1823. It wrote finis to earlier Russian dreams of a great empire in the Pacific Northwest and ended the possibility of Russian rivalry for the mastery of Oregon.

It is significant that the first of these agreements was the Treaty of October 20, 1818, between the United States and Great Britain. What these two dynamic powers did conditioned the attitude of the others. A territorial arrangement between them virtually obliged Spain and Russia on their part to make accommodation. The security of Spanish interests, which were both extensive and ill-guarded, hinged particularly on the attitude taken by Britain. As a matter of fact, the British Foreign Office had already signaled the Spanish government not to expect any support, even of a diplomatic character, in striking a bargain with the United States. For many years Spain had leaned on England in the hope of saving her regime in the Floridas. The British *quid pro quo* for this prop was the keeping of the United States at a safe distance from the Caribbean, where Britain had important colonies and commercial interests. So long as Spain possessed the Floridas she interposed a barrier between the United States and these interests. Theoretically the Spanish empire was still a monopolistic regime functioning under the time-honored regulations of the Spanish mercantile system; actually it was in hopeless bondage to British commerce and diplomacy. In 1814 Britain had made a final attempt to keep the United States from the shores of the Gulf of Mexico: she had taken advantage of her war with this country to land an army for the capture of New Orleans. The campaign had failed and that part of the country had been restored to the status quo; that is to say, the United States occupied the coast and hinterland from the mouth of the Mississippi on the west to the Perdido River on the east. A small segment of this occupied territory—that between the Mississippi and the Iberville—the United States had clear title to by virtue of the Louisiana Purchase. The remainder, a part of West Florida, had been forcibly incorporated under American jurisdiction as the result of local disaffection, aided and abetted by the government in Washington. In the legal sense, however, its status was still undetermined.

After 1814 Spain was admonished against quarreling with the United States. A clear test occurred in April 1818. General Andrew Jackson, making war on the Seminole Indians of Florida, pursued the Indians right into the Spanish coastal towns of St. Marks and Pensacola. There he found two British Indian traders, Am-



brister and Arbuthnot, who had furnished the Seminoles with arms. Their trial and execution gave the British government a pretext for interposing against this invasion of Spanish soil if it so wished. The invasion was a punitive one against marauding Indians whom the Spaniards had failed to hold in restraint, nevertheless it was by no means certain that it would not be followed by permanent occupation of the country. The "avowed and true Policy of Great Britain," however, to quote Lord Castlereagh, was "in the existing state of the World, to appease controversy & to secure if possible for all states a long interval of Repose . . ." From this line the British Foreign Secretary declined to budge, and Spain in her weakness had no recourse but to put up the best appearances possible.

The central problem with which all four powers were coping was how to find a way to slice up the continent by peaceful agreement. The Russian part was the simplest, as we have seen, though it was settled last. The Anglo-American effort was only partially successful. It gave the two countries a conventional boundary along the forty-ninth parallel from the Lake of the Woods to the Rockies, thereby implementing the Louisiana Purchase. Since 1783 the British had always maintained their right to the joint use of the Mississippi. They had tried by negotiation to have a boundary that would bring the upper portion of the river on their side. In other words, according to the British conception of a division of territory west of the Great Lakes, the line of the boundary would be an irregular V-shaped one dropping down to a point on the river where the Twin Cities were later founded. The straight line along the forty-ninth, which excluded the British altogether from the Mississippi Valley, was the principal advantage won by the United States from this treaty. It automatically eliminated British competition in the development of the country north of the Missouri River. On the other hand, the attempt at division in Oregon, between the Rockies and the sea, failed. Too many vital interests in relation to the control of the seacoast were at stake to permit a simple partition along a straight line, and the problem was left to be worked out twenty-eight years later in the rough and tumble of actual rivalry.

It must be remembered that the United States bought Louisiana in 1803 without really knowing what it was getting. Let us recall the ambiguous phrases of the Treaty of 1803: France ceded to the United States whatever she had acquired from Spain in the Treaty of San Ildefonso, by which Louisiana, under the Spanish flag from 1762 to 1800, was turned back to France. Spain had by that treaty ceded "the Colony or Province of Louisiana with the Same extent

that it now has in the hands of Spain, & that it had when France possessed it, and Such as it Should be after the Treaties subsequently entered into between Spain and other States." But the point is that there had never been established boundaries in this great vacant land. The French quite naturally had assumed the widest possible range for their claims, which was the Rio Grande; on the other hand, the actual French frontier in the eighteenth century was Natchitoches on the Red River. The Spaniards on their part founded a settlement at San Antonio, and had a frontier garrison at Los Adaes on the Arroyo Hondo, just twenty miles west of the French. Administratively the Spaniards considered Texas separate from Louisiana during the forty years of Spanish jurisdiction over the latter, and their conventional line between the two provinces was the Sabine River.

All that the United States could be sure of in 1803 was that it had acquired a corridor down the Mississippi to the Gulf, the width of the corridor was purely speculative. Leading men of the Southwest, familiar with the Spanish administration, thought that it ended on the west with the Sabine. But Jefferson, with his characteristic expansionist inclinations, wanted the uttermost, and so he took the French view that had prevailed prior to 1762. He wrote a treatise in 1805 based upon old French documents to "prove" that Louisiana reached to the Rio Grande. Unbeknown to himself, Jefferson's ideas coincided with Napoleon's. When the latter was on the eve of dispatching his armies to New Orleans in 1802, he ordered the commanding general to mark the boundary at the Rio Grande. But neither Jefferson nor Napoleon could lawfully define a boundary in this way. That depended upon the acquiescence of Spain, which was not obtained. On the contrary, the Treaty of San Ildefonso begged the question and so did the treaty between France and the United States. All that can be truly said is that the United States under Jefferson assumed the mantle of French ambition in North America.

Regardless of legal niceties, however, the width of the Louisiana corridor was not an immediate issue in 1803. Even a narrow passage through to the Gulf, with the Mississippi under exclusive American control, was of immense strategic value. It split the Spanish Gulf Coast in two parts and permitted an enveloping movement against the Floridas. Spain had begun the era in 1783 with an incomparable advantage over the United States in that she then possessed all of the valuable points along the Gulf and could penetrate inland. The chances of dictating a boundary according to her own

wishes were then in her favor. In contrast, she was now in the unenviable position of having to make such accommodation with the United States as she could in order to guarantee herself a reasonably stable boundary for the future. Security for the Spanish empire in America by 1818, however, was the hollowest of jokes. The kingdom was hopelessly impoverished and subordinate to England and France in Europe, and its colonies were in full revolt.

The situation then in 1818 along the Spanish border was as follows. The United States had *de facto* possession of West Florida as far east as the Perdido—that is, it had a vital part of the Gulf Coast, including Mobile. It held this arbitrarily against the protest of the Spaniards. East Florida was only an isolated Spanish colony, helpless against invasion, which might come at any time in retaliation for the Indian raids which the Spaniards could not have prevented even had they been willing. On the other side of the Mississippi, Spain had in 1806 re-occupied the province of Texas nearly as far east as the Red River. In actual fact this meant a thin garrison at Los Adaes, twenty miles to the west of the Red. An American garrison faced the Spaniards at Natchitoches, the old French frontier post of the eighteenth century. Between the two lay neutral ground by mutual consent. Thus the American corridor in practice extended from a point not far from the Sabine on the west to Mobile on the east.

North and west of Texas was the province of New Mexico, which by means of the Santa Fé trail was a gateway of trade between the United States and Old Mexico. Between Santa Fé and St. Louis there was nothing but the great open spaces. Finally there was the Oregon country in the northwest, over which the Spaniards had vague unsubstantiated claims, but where they had made no settlements.

The Spanish-American negotiations commenced in 1817. Two years were consumed in making the treaty, and two years additional were taken up in getting the ratifications. Chronic filibustering raids and disorders along the border interfered with the negotiations, and tempted Americans to march in and take possession in advance of a formal cession. Amelia Island at the mouth of the St. Mary's became once more the subject of a temporary military occupation when the Scotchman, Gregor MacGregor, attempted a conquest of East Florida in the name of the South American revolutionists. A Bonapartist plot to revolutionize Texas brought another temporary occupation at Galveston Island. But the most serious incident of all was the deliberate invasion of East Florida by General Jackson in

April 1818 While meant to chastise the Seminoles, the expedition overran the Spanish posts of Pensacola and St. Marks Jackson himself wanted the occupation to be permanent, but President Monroe preferred the more graceful path of diplomacy.

The Spaniards themselves never doubted that Florida was doomed, but they hoped through British or French support to limit American aspirations on the southwest. Luis de Onís, who had been the unrecognized Spanish envoy in Washington since 1809, had orders in 1817 to give up the Floridas in exchange for an agreement on the Mississippi as the western boundary Spain waited in vain for British diplomatic support and then in 1818 sent word to Onís to fall back on the Sabine, or if necessary even farther. Onís hoped to draw a line which would keep Texas Spanish, protect New Mexico against encroachment, and keep the Americans away from the coast of Oregon. Until November 1818 he had orders to insist upon a line that would follow up the Missouri River to its source and thence due north to the forty-ninth parallel. This would eliminate the United States altogether from the great Northwest and draw the western boundary of Louisiana somewhere east of the Rockies. In view of the agreement with Great Britain it was hardly practicable.

John Quincy Adams, who handled the negotiations for the United States, followed the Jeffersonian argument for all of Texas. But he was also interested in getting the Oregon claims of Spain as a means of bolstering the American case for that country. The upshot was that a comprehensive boundary treaty was finally signed on February 22, 1819. Both the Floridas, including the portion which had been already occupied and carved up as parts of the Mississippi Territory and the State of Alabama, were granted in full title Spain resigned her claims to Oregon in our favor. The *quid pro quo* which she got was American recognition of Texas as Spanish. The boundary was set at the Sabine, not at the Rio Grande.

Between Oregon in the north, where the line was drawn along the forty-second parallel east from the Pacific to the watershed of the Rockies, and Texas on the south, lay New Mexico. Here the principal settlements were Santa Fé, Taos, and Albuquerque By getting a boundary 360 miles to the east of Santa Fé the Spaniards relied on the intervening barren country to protect these essential points against aggression.

The United States on its part consolidated all the land east of the Mississippi under a single flag, and won confirmation of its right under the Louisiana Purchase to the valleys of the Mississippi and its great tributaries in the West, the Missouri and the Arkansas The

American diplomatic position in the negotiation of this treaty was notably different from what it had been in 1803. Prior to that date, the United States was interested solely in the east bank of the Mississippi, and it was prepared to guarantee the west bank to Spain. Even after the Louisiana Purchase this country continued to look upon the problem as primarily one of security, for it continued to be preoccupied with the segment of land known as West Florida. In 1817-1819 the American administration assumed a much more independent position toward Spain, knowing that the latter did not have British backing. The "sacrifice" which it made for its otherwise great gains by the treaty was Texas, which it might have had if the Monroe administration had been adamant. Americans later complained of this, and clung to the belief that Texas had been lost so that Florida and Oregon might be gained. However exaggerated this feeling, it was quite clear that the treaty was a masterpiece. It was definitive recognition that this country was a great power on the North American continent, for when the whole of the Mississippi Valley and the Floridas passed under American control the position of the United States was impregnable.

The treaty remained in abeyance for two years, during which demands were raised in the United States that its terms be executed by force. The Spanish government had tried to avoid the inevitable in 1817 by granting away all of the unappropriated land in the Floridas to three Spanish nobles. Presumably this would function so as to thwart the American government from ever obtaining control over the lands ceded to it. Discovery of this clumsy sidestepping caused John Quincy Adams to insist upon the annulment of the grants. The chief factor in the delay, however, was the hope of the Spanish government to exact a promise from the United States not to lend aid to the rebel colonies of South America. To placate the Spaniards during the negotiations in 1817 Adams had persuaded Congress to amend the Neutrality Law so as to check the fitting out of filibustering expeditions in aid of the rebels. Adams furthermore used his influence to check a movement in Congress to extend recognition to the *de facto* Hispanic-American states. The American government withheld its recognition of the latter, but on the other hand showed signs of taking possession of the ceded borderlands by force if the treaty remained unratified. This may or may not have been the inducement to Spain to ratify, at any rate she carried out the exchange of ratifications on February 22, 1821, precisely two years after the signing of the treaty.

CHAPTER 33

THE ANNEXATION OF TEXAS, 1821-1845

THE ORIGINAL American colony in Texas was planted by Stephen Austin, the son of a Connecticut Yankee, in the fertile coastal plains lying to the east of San Antonio. From this tiny Mexican post to the Sabine River, the conventional boundary between Mexico and the United States, was approximately three hundred miles. Near the northeast corner, but well inside the boundary, was the Mexican town of Nacogdoches, through which pioneers from Mississippi and other Western states and territories of the United States filtered during the 1820's. Considering its remoteness from other civilized communities, in both Mexico and the United States, the colony made remarkable progress and by 1835, the year of its war of independence, it had garnered at least thirty thousand settlers from the American Southwest. Sprinkled among these were a handful of Mexicans, some Indian tribes, and a few families of British origin. The latter gathered chiefly at Galveston, which, together with the neighboring town of Houston, rose on the sea-borne trade with New Orleans. Through Galveston poured most of the supplies and many of the recruits who helped in winning a speedy victory over the Mexicans in 1836.

The first settlers came in response to a Mexican invitation secured by the Austins. The desire of the latter to father a colony coincided with the Mexican wish to establish a settled frontier which would be a surer guaranty against encroachments from the United States than a mere conventional line. Mexican hopes centered in the possibility of attracting settlers of Spanish or French blood from Louisiana. In this they were doomed to a thorough disillusionment. Austin and other *empresarios*—men who contracted to import settlers in return for large grants of the public land—relied rather upon families of pure American stock from the Southwest. Thus by a policy of free grants Mexico actually entered into competition for settlers with the American Southwest, where land titles could be procured only by purchase; naturally her lands received preference. As a Western paper, the *Missouri Advocate*, put it reprovingly, there was a difference between "a republic which gives first rate land gratis and a republic which will not sell inferior land for what it is worth."

For the first seven years the Mexicans allowed the colonists a free hand, even permitting them the choice of their own tracts. Apparently they relied upon the immense distances to insulate their colony against the United States, hoping that the colony would grow up well inside the legal boundary. This was true of the first settlements; but the natural tendency of the Texans was to spread *eastward* and thus to close the gap between themselves and United States territory. The British representative in Mexico City saw the fallacy in Mexican expectations, and urged the government to interpose a community of thirty thousand Indians on the border. A characteristic attempt by the Edwards brothers to establish a border republic in the vicinity of Nacogdoches in 1827 was the first danger signal.

Mexican policy thereafter exhibited all the weaknesses of uncertainty and tardy attempts at supervision. Besides closing the door in 1830 to further American immigration, it furnished the Texans with practical grievances which the statesmanship of moderates like Stephen Austin failed to dissolve. Austin hoped that his country would become the "garden of North America" which would build up a prosperous trade in cotton with the West Indies and Europe, and seems not to have been impressed with the "inevitability" of revolution against Mexico. At any rate he labored to induce the Mexican Congress to follow a broad policy, granting full political autonomy to Texas. A slave holder himself, he opposed the antislavery laws of Mexico as applied to Texas, and he made several trips to Mexico City to bring about the necessary reforms. Most of all the Texans desired administrative separation from the State of Coahuila, which was seven hundred miles distant, and the setting up of state government in Texas. This point of view seemed by 1834 to be gaining with the Mexican Congress, but it was beaten the next year by the dictator, Santa Ana. The latter invaded the country, massacred and drove the settlers eastward from San Antonio (where occurred the fatal siege of the Alamo), but was outmaneuvered and captured by the Texan forces under Sam Houston at San Jacinto, April 21, 1836. Texan independence was now an accomplished fact.

Although unacknowledged by Mexico, Texas nevertheless was rewarded with the full dignity of an independent republic. She won diplomatic recognition first from the United States in 1837, followed by France, Great Britain, the Netherlands, and Belgium. Equally important was her substantial growth in population and wealth during the ensuing decade. Of the hundreds of men who

poured across the frontier during the rebellion comparatively few returned to their homes in the United States. The flow of immigration was freshened and was especially heavy in 1844, the year that proved crucial for the annexation issue in the United States. The country was reputed to have a population of one hundred thousand, exclusive of Indians, in 1845. This indicates that the most rapid growth of Texas had taken place since the revolution, at which time, it will be recalled, the estimated population was somewhat more than thirty thousand.

This growth in population was accompanied by a land boom in which Texas scrip circulated freely across the border. Such notables of the state of Mississippi as Senator Robert J. Walker, Governor John A. Quitman, John H. Claiborne, and Senator Henry S. Foote, all of whom were stalwarts in the agitation for annexation, bought heavily in it. Sharing the honors with this type of prosperity was commerce. In the last quarter of 1838 Texas took third place in the value of exports from New Orleans. Galveston and Houston were getting the bulk of the immigration and trade from the United States, and Galveston was commencing a direct cotton trade with Liverpool.

These were the signposts pointing to the future of Texas. At first the Texans sought annexation to the United States, but were summarily rebuffed by President Van Buren in 1837. The latter feared to excite the forces of antislavery in this country. Annexation was doubtful up to the last, as we shall see, and the Texans had to calculate the prospects of their future political independence. With these calculations went plans for the seizure of additional territory from Mexico and for the development of Texas even as a rival of the United States. The aims of the Texan government were twofold. (1) to expand the commerce of the new republic by negotiating commercial treaties abroad, and (2) to extend the frontier. For more than four years it sought to develop this program. An agent was sent to London to negotiate a treaty with the British government, and in 1841 an armed force was dispatched to capture Santa Fé, hoping to bring that important outpost of Mexican-American trade within Texan control and to divert its trade southward through Texas. The attempt failed, and the following year the Mexicans retaliated by capturing San Antonio and holding it temporarily.

This showed that Texas had serious limitations and made it questionable whether in the long run she could remain independent without the support of some strong outside power. She was threat-

ened indeed with the usual fate of buffer states. Either British or American backing was essential. Nevertheless, Texan leaders continued to dream dreams of conquest, embracing even California and Oregon as far as the Columbia. As late as 1844 there was a movement on foot to join the Southern States of America to Texas and create a great new confederacy with its western boundary on the Pacific. In his farewell message of December 1844, Houston voiced these ambitions. "If we remain an independent nation," he said, "our territory will be extensive—unlimited. The Pacific alone will bound the mighty march of our race and our empire. From Europe and America her soil is to be peopled." To this day it is not clear whether the departing Texan president really meant this or whether he was issuing a veiled warning to the United States to admit Texas to the Union ere it was too late. His successor, Anson Jones, was prepared to accept a treaty of peace with Mexico procured for him by the British *chargé d'affaires*, Captain Charles Elliott.

Nothing in the early history of the annexation question points to the existence of a general public interest in the United States. Not even during the Texan revolution, when, in spite of "neutrality," recruits and supplies poured into Texas, was annexation a matter of public debate. Only a few regarded the country as "ripe fruit" ready to drop into the American lap, and the action of Van Buren in rejecting the Texan appeal aroused no particular controversy. It became a live issue only when President John Tyler aggressively made it so in 1843, with the assistance of Andrew Jackson and others of the Democratic party chiefs.

The question first arose in connection with the boundary negotiation of 1819 with Spain. The Louisiana Territory having no established western boundary when transferred by France, it became a matter of practical bargaining with the Spaniards where the line should be drawn. John Quincy Adams claimed the maximum, which meant putting the boundary at the Rio Grande. Wishing to get the advantage of the Spanish claims to Oregon, however, Adams backed down on Texas. The line was drawn at the Sabine, the *easternmost* of the Texan streams. Only Thomas Hart Benton and a handful of fellow Missourians protested the bargain at the time as a sacrifice of Western interest. But in the publicity campaign of 1843 Senator Robert J. Walker of Mississippi shrewdly set forth the issue as one of "re-annexation." This was of course a slogan without basis in law or fact, coined to make the people believe they had a "right" to Texas. Indubitably it played its role in stimulating popular enthusiasm. But the only legitimate question in 1843—

1845 was whether or not an adjacent republic whose independence had been duly acknowledged should be admitted to the Union.

In the years intervening between the treaty of 1819 and the Texan war of independence, however, the administrations of both John Quincy Adams and Andrew Jackson had sought to beguile Mexico into modifying the boundary. Both presidents were anxious to conclude whatever bargain the Mexicans would agree to, and to pay a sum ranging from one to five million dollars, depending in part on the area of land the latter would cede. Any Mexican government could have acquired a handsome sum (assuming that the American Congress would appropriate the money) in return for moving the boundary westward from the Sabine to any one of the other Texan streams flowing into the Gulf—the Colorado, the Nueces, or the Rio Grande in particular. Indeed, Jackson's emissary, Anthony Butler of Mississippi, worked on the Mexican leaders, Luis Alamán and Santa Ana, with the idea that possibly ten per cent of the purchase money might be diverted into their private pockets. In 1833 Butler reported to Jackson that he would have to use up to six hundred thousand dollars "in purchasing Men, and the remainder in purchasing the Country." Almost equally dubious was the quibble raised by Jackson over the identity of the Sabine, in which the American government asserted that the west fork of this river, the Neches, was the stream intended by the treaty.

Higgling of this sort naturally met with no response when larger issues of national policy were at stake. As we have seen, the Texan program of Mexico was one of insulation against the United States, not one of bartering territory for money. Onís, the Spanish diplomat who concluded the boundary treaty of 1819, had bequeathed his distrust of American ambitions to the Mexicans, and indeed they had only to observe the technique of acquiring territory that had been perfected in the case of the Floridas to be impressed with his warnings. If they needed any further wisdom in the matter, they got a generous supply from the British representative, Mr. Ward. Ward and his fellow diplomat in Mexico City, Joel R. Poinsett, whom John Quincy Adams had sent, were rivals for the hand of Mexico. Far-reaching concepts of national power, in which Texas was the pawn, moved them both. Besides trying to buy a slice of Texas, Poinsett aimed at a general Pan-American federation under the influence of the United States, with Great Britain and other European powers excluded. On the other hand, British interests in Hispanic America were far-flung, and British diplomacy aimed at moral ascendancy over the Hispanic-American states. Naturally the

British minister regarded Mexico as a spearhead for opposition to American designs, and intrigued against his rival accordingly.

Thus matters reached a stalemate some time before the Texan revolution broke out. Far from taking the American bids seriously, the Mexicans recklessly attempted to stop the further Americanization of their colony. There is some evidence of a circumstantial nature that Andrew Jackson, when president, was determined to get Texas by hook or by crook. He kept his own skirts clean in Anthony Butler's attempts at corruption, but did nothing to discourage Butler. And there is the possibility that through secret conferences with Sam Houston he helped to foster the Texan revolt, some of his contemporaries in Congress, like John Quincy Adams, believed he was directly implicated in it. If such was the case—for the suspicion is unproved—Jackson was more careful in concealing realities than were his mentors, Jefferson and Madison, whose intrigues in regard to the Floridas are now an established fact. Furthermore, Jackson remained inactive throughout the Texan revolt, and if he did not prevent Texan violations of American neutrality he showed no haste in recognizing Texan independence. It was his successor, Martin Van Buren, who deliberately rejected the free offer from the Texans to bring their whole country into the Union. This act was a negation of everything the American government had previously attempted, and the reason for it was fear of exciting a sectional conflict over the incorporation of new slave territory.

It was John Tyler, a president in need of a cause, who assumed the risk that Van Buren shunned. Tyler decided more or less on his own initiative to make Texan annexation a public issue. Essentially his problem was to convince the American people that the step, far from being sectional, would confer benefits on the whole nation. Thus beginning with 1843 the case becomes chiefly a study in the influencing of public opinion and its effect on political parties. The Texan question was the chief issue in the presidential campaign of 1844.

The issue excited intense opposition from the forces of anti-slavery. John Quincy Adams was now wholeheartedly in this camp. He charged that annexation was a deliberate conspiracy of slaveholders. Formerly a vigorous opponent of British influence, he encouraged the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, the most powerful organization of its kind in the world, to bring pressure on the British government to use its influence to end slavery. The entire abolitionist press took alarm; the Vermont legislature passed a resolution on the subject, and when in January 1845 Congress finally

passed the fateful joint resolution authorizing the admission of Texas as a state, Massachusetts actually threatened nullification. In addition to these forces annexation encountered the powerful opposition of Thomas Hart Benton, the same who had complained so bitterly of the sacrifice of American claims in the Treaty of 1819. Whether Benton fought the issue in 1843-1845 because he believed that the United States had resigned all right to Texas by the treaty and could not therefore take it up again or whether he feared annexation would lead to a division in the Union is not clear. Finally, the Whig Party led by Henry Clay came out openly in opposition.

On the whole, however, the pro-annexationists developed the more telling of the arguments. Tyler prepared his ground carefully by getting articles on Texas published in the newspapers. In the South an independent Texas was depicted as a rival, dangerous both as a cotton producer and as an abolitionist state. For Tyler and the Department of State, first under Secretary Upshur, a Virginian, and then under John C. Calhoun, were kept fully informed of the activities of the British antislavery societies and of the interest of the British government. In fact one of the prime objects of British diplomacy was to rid Texas of slavery and foster the republic as a source of supply of raw cotton. Captain Elliott was promoting a scheme in Texas for emancipation, whereby the slaveowners would receive compensation from the British government and in return Texas would conclude a free-trade treaty with Britain.

The well-known antislavery policies of the British government revealed an even subtler angle to the question. Could Great Britain through her powerful influence exert pressure great enough to destroy slavery *within* the United States? Lord Aberdeen, the British Foreign Secretary, took pains to deny the intention to do so, although at the same time avowing an interest in seeing slavery abolished throughout the world. Calhoun on his part saw in British pressure on Texas an indirect blow at slavery in the Union, and seized the opportunity to read Lord Aberdeen a long lecture on the virtues of slavery in America and the right of each state to determine its own institutions. This dispatch was written April 18, 1844, just a week after Calhoun had signed a treaty of annexation with the Texan commissioners. That Calhoun justified annexation on the ground that it would protect slavery in America can be seen from the following excerpt from a private letter he wrote in May 1844 to the governor of Georgia:

The time is come when England must be met on the abolition question. You will have seen, that I have placed the Texan question on

that issue. I am resolved to keep it there, be the consequence what it may. I shall rise at every step in the correspondence, which may grow out of it. Mr Pakenham [the British minister] replied to my communication, and I have answered his reply. I took the broad ground that our policy was to interfere with no other country, and to permit none to interfere with ours in any respect whatever, as it related to our internal concerns. . . .¹

The flaw in Calhoun's position lay of course in his defense of a domestic institution favored only by the southern half of the country. His dispatch, being published, contributed to the defeat of the very annexation treaty which his predecessor, Upshur, had negotiated and which Calhoun, as Upshur's successor, had signed. This treaty provided for the incorporation of Texas in the Union as a *territory*, thus leaving the door open to its later partition into states, slave or free. It was smothered in the Senate by a majority vote of two-thirds, comprising seven Democrats and all the Whig senators but one.

Defeat of the treaty did not terminate the issue, however. Friends of annexation, like Duff Green and Walker, who had a material stake in Texas, were more adept than Calhoun in presenting the issue favorably to the country at large. There was one point on which the whole nation was sensitive—British opposition to annexation. Commercially the fears of the North could be aroused by playing up the dangers of Texas as a free-trade republic whence British goods could be smuggled across the border on such a scale as to nullify the tariff. The South might even secede from the Union and throw in its lot with Texas. Such a movement in fact did develop in 1844, having for its slogan "Texas or Disunion." In short, men like Walker found the arguments that would influence the hopes as well as the fears of both North and South. Annexation was "essential to the security of the South, the defence of the West, and highly conducive to the welfare and perpetuity of the whole Union." Behind these arguments, furthermore, were the intense anti-British prejudice of the time and the instinctive fear of being hemmed in politically by Great Britain, should the latter become dominant in Texas. This indeed seemed to be the most important consideration with Andrew Jackson, who spurred Tyler on and who publicly announced that it was "now or never." Thus in the manipulation of public opinion a complex set of factors appears to have been at work, but the argument that made a universal appeal was the se-

¹ Quoted from the Calhoun Papers in Bemis, *American Secretaries of State and Their Diplomacy*, V, 154

curity argument, in the political as well as in the economic sense. It was a case of either annex or lose Texas to Great Britain.

The presidential election of 1844, in which the victor was the Tennessean, James K. Polk, Andrew Jackson's choice, was interpreted as a popular mandate in favor of annexation. Polk had been an outspoken advocate; and his opponent, Henry Clay, sensing the drift in the wind, had shifted his ground during the campaign. On March 1, 1845, four days before Polk became president, a joint resolution was completed in Congress by a vote of 120 to 98 in the House of Representatives and of 27 to 25 in the Senate, authorizing the President to negotiate with Texas on the basis of her admission as a state. Thus even a strenuous campaign resulted at best in only a slim favorable majority.

Meanwhile the issue became almost as complex in Texas. President Anson Jones favored independence on the basis of a treaty of recognition and territorial guaranty with Mexico. British influence was strongest at Galveston and of course opposed annexation. From there Captain Charles Elliott departed for Mexico with Jones's approbation, and returned on May 30, 1845, with the requisite treaty in his pocket. Moreover, so strongly did the British government feel on the subject that it was prepared to negotiate a tripartite treaty with France and Mexico to guarantee the independence of the Texan republic. Actually this project did not succeed: France balked at it, and Lord Aberdeen himself gladly covered his retreat when he learned from Pakenham, the British minister at Washington, of the strength of the annexation movement in the United States. Nevertheless it is clear that the Texans had a free choice in the matter when their president submitted both the Mexican treaty and the American annexation proposal to a popularly elected convention.

The overwhelming vote which ensued in the Texan convention in July 1845 was by no means without at least some preparation of public opinion. As far back as September 1844 Tyler had sent one Andrew J. Donelson, a nephew of Jackson, to the neighboring republic. Donelson was joined later by former Governor Yell of Arkansas, Commodore Stockton, and finally Charles Wickliffe, sent by Polk as a personal emissary. These agents were apparently authorized to mobilize Texan public opinion and to broadcast lavish promises of the internal improvements Congress would make for the country. Little is known of their movements. But when word was received that the joint resolution had passed the American Congress, public meetings were held throughout Texas to vote resolu-

tions in favor of acceptance Thirty years later Ashbel Smith, Texan Secretary of State, who, like Jones, opposed annexation, made some rather scathing remarks on the subject: "Public meetings were called by active partisans . . . the magnificent promises unfolded . . . the people inflamed. Under these influences . . . and animated by affection for the country of their birth, the strongest after all of the motives governing their actions, the people of Texas with overwhelming unanimity rejected the overtures of peace from Mexico . . . and became a state of the American union" Sam Houston, whose personal views remain a mystery, had a different explanation According to him his fellow countrymen were simply weary and ready for "almost any port in a storm", peace and security were their motives

Texan annexation is among the knottiest and most obscure of the expansion problems. Constituent to it was the peaceful colonization of the land by Americans, followed by a war of independence. In the ten years that followed the latter the future of Texas hung in the balance Nothing in the record points to the "inevitable destiny" of the country becoming absorbed by the United States, despite its overwhelming American population On the contrary, there is much to suggest that Texas might have kept apart indefinitely from the parent hive To many thinking men of the day, like Daniel Webster, the establishment of separate republics in the West, colonized by Americans but independent politically, seemed a likely solution for the problem of bigness that, to their minds, confronted the country Nor in the Texan issue did many Americans other than a small nucleus of Westerners, grow heady with the wine of "manifest destiny" The question, as we have seen, was one of high controversy up to its very close. Among the several arguments that appear to have borne most weight, both in the United States and in Texas, was that of peace and security at home as well as abroad Texas might well have remained independent; but its position as a buffer almost certainly spelled European—British, and perhaps French—control in the future From this standpoint, it may thus be said that in order to insure the security of its frontier the United States in 1845 took a long leap ahead in the direction of expansion

CHAPTER 34

THE PARTITION OF OREGON, 1818-1846

THE OREGON COUNTRY, perhaps better described simply as the Northwest, was in the first half of the nineteenth century an extraordinary international frontier. Five major approaches to it are historic, three by water and two by land: (1) from Sitka, the Russian post in Alaska in the north; (2) up from Cape Horn by way of the California coast or Hawaii, (3) across the Pacific from Australasian and Chinese waters by way of Hawaii, (4) across the Canadian prairies and the Rockies from Hudson Bay and down the Fraser or the Columbia River; (5) from St. Louis in the American West across the Great Plains to the mountains and thence down the Snake River into the Columbia. The first of these was used by Russians en route to their southernmost outpost, Fort Ross, in California. Far-seeing explorers for the Russian-American Fur Company conceived of a marine empire resting on three points—Sitka, Fort Ross, and the Hawaiian Islands. Alaska and the Northwest coast would be continuous Russian territory for the supply of furs, and Hawaii would be a valuable station for the assembly and transshipment of the furs to the China market. These plans were, however, fated purely for the realm of dreams. The Imperial Russian government repulsed them and allowed its subjects outside of Alaska only a temporary foothold at Fort Ross. The Spanish approach to the Northwest was feebler, consisting of a single petulant attempt to frustrate a British trading venture at Nootka Sound on the Pacific side of Vancouver Island (1789). Spanish ambitions too were a minus quantity.

The only sure approach to the Northwest was made by the British and the Americans, whose interest focused on the stretch of coast from the mouth of the Columbia River northward to Queen Charlotte Island. The great English explorers, James Cook and George Vancouver, reached the coast by crossing the Pacific. The Yankee mariner, Captain Robert Gray, rounding the Horn, was the first to pass the bar at the mouth of the Columbia and sail up the river (1792). Yankee traders were the first to capitalize these discoveries by successfully marketing the furs bought from the Indians among the eager mandarins of southern China. The chief trading areas were the lower Columbia Valley, Nootka on Vancouver Island, and

Queen Charlotte Island. After some experimenting it was found that small chisels of gleaming copper (often made on shipboard) best suited the Indian taste, the rate of exchange varying from one to ten chisels per sea otter skin. For nearly a score of years prior to the War of 1812 Yankee skippers exploited their splendid trade secret—the use of Oregon skins as a medium of exchange for the rich wares of the Orient. British competition was nonexistent, since the charter rights of the English East India Company gave to that concern a monopoly of the entire Oriental market as against other British traders. The British fur men of the Northwest had to sell their furs to the Americans if they were to have a market. Small wonder that at that time the British saw very little future for themselves in the country.

Thus Oregon was introduced to the American mind as a vital link between the United States and the Far East. It was a stepping-stone of empire. From it the route across the Pacific passed by the Hawaiian Islands, where the ships lingered to load fresh supplies and cargoes of sandalwood, prized, like Oregon skins, by the Cantonese. Hawaii was the second steppingstone in the vast ocean. Together they met the conceptions of a maritime rather than a land empire. It is well to emphasize this, because Oregon was at that time looked upon as a strategic spot in the Pacific Basin, not as a Western emigrant's paradise. And for many years the Northwest was only a link in the chain of commercial empire. It was like a distant marine base. Not until the second quarter of the century did it attract permanent settlers. The sea route around the Horn was no barrier, and Yankee interest in Oregon was merely a phase of a larger interest in the Pacific and especially the Far East.

Nevertheless the American grip on a country so remote from the United States, where the trade routes were wholly unguarded by a navy, was highly precarious. It was Thomas Jefferson who made the first move to close the gap by land and convert Oregon into a permanent American window on the Pacific. The successful Lewis and Clark expedition in 1804-1806 was the fruit of his dream to find a direct route across the continent by way of the Missouri River. Thomas Hart Benton who was later so influential in the final partition of the country, credits Jefferson with being "the first to propose the North American road to India and the introduction of Asiatic trade on that road." Nor was this conception of Oregon as a window allowed to fade. At the approach of the diplomatic crisis with Britain over the territory in February 1845, a prominent Congressman, C. J. Ingersoll, expressed the matter in these words:

The Oregon question by too many deemed a mere matter of land or territorial acquisition, is, in its larger and better estimate, a commercial question. . . . It embraces consequences to the Republic equal, if not superior to any question of acquisition or annexation that has arisen. . . . Seat the United States firmly in Oregon and the commercial enterprise and the wealth of the world will centralize within our limits. . . . No question has yet arisen in our history so closely connected with the extension of American power and greatness.¹

Much water was to flow over the dam in the forty years between the Lewis and Clark expedition and the final acquisition of the Oregon country, however. Yankees ships on the Columbia thinned out and finally disappeared during the War of 1812. Furthermore, the small trading post of Astoria, established by John Jacob Astor near the mouth of the river shortly before the war, failed to survive except in name. Astor had some Canadian partners, who sold the property to the Northwest Fur Company of Montreal after the outbreak of war. It then became a British military post, which was returned to the American *flag* in 1818 in accordance with the promises of the Treaty of Ghent. This did not mean, however, that it was returned to American *private ownership*. It remained a property of the Northwest Company and passed to the Hudson's Bay Company in 1821, when the latter took over the assets of its Montreal rival. American private enterprise thus practically vanished for the time being from the country.

All that actually survived the War of 1812 were certain legal claims based chiefly upon the discoveries of Captain Gray in 1792 and of Lewis and Clark in 1804-1806. Against these had to be balanced British claims of a similar character. the findings of Captain Cook (1778) and of Vancouver (1792), both of whose discoveries came from seaward, and the famous "Nor'Westers," Mackenzie, Fraser, and Thompson, who pushed into the country from the Canadian prairies. The American discoveries took priority over the British at the mouth of the Columbia and in the land to the south of the river; the British took priority at Puget Sound, in the islands and the mainland to the north, and in the headwaters of the Columbia. Lewis and Clark pioneered the route from St. Louis, while David Thompson pricked out a line for Hudson's Bay trading posts extending from the Nelson River, which flows into Hudson Bay, to the headwaters of the Columbia and thence down that stream to its mouth. Thus the two rival claims converged at the Columbia River, the British on the north bank and the American on the south

¹ Appendix, *Congressional Globe*, 28th Cong., 2d sess., p. 241.

Interest in the Oregon country began to revive about 1818, and for many years thereafter it was thought that the Columbia would prove a second Mississippi—a great highway to inland empire and a veritable route to the Far East.

Thus in 1818 Oregon was still a virgin territory without boundaries. Eastward it merged into the country of the Louisiana Purchase, which in turn had no defined northern limits in relation to the vast domain of the Hudson's Bay Company held under charter from the Crown. To the north was Alaska, a property of the Russian-American Company without territorial limits. On the south was Spanish California, also minus legal boundaries. Within the next seven years a set of four bilateral treaties partitioned all the country *except* Oregon and left that country open only to British and American enterprise.

The master agreement of this series was the Anglo-American Treaty of October 20, 1818. This divided the country east of the Rockies at the forty-ninth parallel, a convenient division which involved no particular strategic considerations. But the problem of Oregon was insoluble at the time because of the supposed value of the Columbia River as a great arterial highway to Asia. An American motion that the line of the forty-ninth be continued to the sea was rejected because it would exclude the British from the use of the river and, if the line were carried across Vancouver Island, would even shut them out from Puget Sound and the Straits of Juan de Fuca. Such a proposal meant their virtual debarment from the coast. Therefore for the country to the west of the mountain summits the treaty simply continued the status quo. The harbors, bays, and rivers of Oregon, as well as the land were declared open for a further period of ten years to the citizens of both countries, without prejudice to Spanish and Russian claims. This is what has been loosely termed "joint occupation." Private competition was permitted to continue, regulated or unregulated by the home governments as the latter might desire. On such practical questions as guaranteeing the titles to land, policing or fortifying, or otherwise providing for the government of the territory the treaty was a blank.

The other three treaties consisted of the Treaty of 1819 between the United States and Spain, which marked off the boundaries of the two powers on a transcontinental scale, and a treaty between the United States and Russia in 1824 followed by a similar one between Britain and Russia in 1825. Under the first of these agreements the line between Spanish and American pretensions became the forty-

second parallel, each power ceding to the other whatever claims it had to the region north or south of the line. The United States relinquished any ambitions it might have for California; Spain renounced her claims to Oregon in favor of the United States. The treaty entailed, as it were, a marking off of their respective spheres of influence. The Russian-American Treaty of 1824 and the Anglo-Russian Treaty of 1825 performed the same function with regard to the northern line of demarcation. Russia and the United States each agreed to limit the activities of their respective subjects, the former to the north of fifty-four forty, the latter to the south. The British treaty repeated this stipulation and in addition provided for the land boundary between Russian Alaska and British North America. Oregon was thus left a vast square of territory limited by natural boundaries to east and west, the Rockies and the ocean, and by conventional lines at north and south, fifty-four forty and forty-two degrees north latitude, respectively.

In a very real sense the development of Oregon began anew during the period of treaty-making just described. Both nations were about on a par at the outset: Americans had lost their former strong position on the Coast, and the British were discouraged. In 1822 the directors of the Hudson's Bay Company were seriously considering withdrawing from the region altogether, but two years later they consented to give it a fresh trial. They were persuaded in their new venture at least in part by the urgent desire of the great foreign minister of the day, George Canning, to obtain the mastery of the vital coastline between the Columbia and the Straits of Juan de Fuca. He believed that "the trade between the Eastern and Western Hemispheres, direct across the Pacific, is the trade of the world most susceptible of rapid augmentation and improvement." British merchants would reap the full advantage after 1834, when the legal monopoly of the East India Company over the China trade would terminate. Impressed with this argument, the Company found an unusually able man in George Simpson, a young Scot of twenty-nine, whom it had put in charge of its entire field service in North America. Simpson personally explored the possibilities of the Columbia, established a pack-horse service between it and the Fraser, and founded a new post, which he named Fort Vancouver, on the north bank of the river.² This was more strategic than the old American post of Astoria for the control of the interior, and from 1824 to 1845, when it was abandoned in favor of Fort Victoria

² This is now Vancouver, Washington, a few miles to the north of Portland, Oregon. The Willamette River enters the Columbia at this point from the south.

on Vancouver Island, it was the Company headquarters and the leading settlement in the entire Oregon country.

Blessed with a splendid organization and an enviable *esprit de corps* among its servants, the Company made rapid strides toward developing and holding the north bank of the Columbia. Anticipating the possibility of American competition, Governor Simpson proposed to protect his southern flank, on the farther side of the river, by creating a veritable "fur desert." For this purpose a young Canadian veteran, Peter Skene Ogden, and a band of hunters scoured the country for game far up the Columbia and down the valley of the Snake. In their zeal they even penetrated beyond the treaty line into the upper valley of the Missouri River—an audacious piece of treaty-breaking which Simpson applauded but which the directors in London flatly refused to countenance. This expedition occurred in 1825, eight years after the "joint occupation" agreement; and it succeeded substantially in its purpose. No organized competition came from the direction of St. Louis. A few American trappers did venture across the "desert," but they found themselves obliged to do their trading only with the Company.

The energetic governor's plans were, moreover, by no means confined to the fur trade. Anticipating the day when a new agreement with the United States would be necessary, the Company hoped to make the Columbia River the permanent partition line. To accomplish this Simpson saw that the planting of permanent British colonies would be necessary. The Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, financed mainly by stockholders of the Hudson's Bay Company, was founded, and farms were established in the vicinity of Fort Vancouver and on a tract running along Puget Sound. The colonization project was not a real success—necessity limited it to the families of retired employees. All together the two companies had in 1841 at least seven hundred and fifty permanent British settlers on their lands, and trade contacts existed with Sitka, San Francisco, the Sandwich Islands, and with American whaling vessels operating in the North Pacific. The early American pioneer farmers in the Willamette Valley indeed found that the only outlet for their produce lay through the marketing facilities of the Hudson's Bay Company.

Against the energy thus displayed by the British company Americans offered practically no competition until after 1841. Then they suddenly awoke to the opportunity that seemed to be slipping. Missionaries who had come into the country during the preceding decade had achieved scant results. There were American religious missions,

supported by the Congregational, Methodist, and other Protestant denominations, at Puget Sound and The Dalles, as well as in the Willamette and Walla Walla valleys. They did not foster colonization, however. Their home connections were in the Eastern states, and they had few ties with the people of the American West. Among these people an "Oregon fever" finally did develop, particularly in Iowa and Missouri; and by 1843 the wheel ruts on the Oregon trail were getting deep. Eight hundred and seventy-five Americans got to Oregon that year, fourteen hundred and seventy-five in 1844, and the third year, three thousand. When the treaty of June 15, 1846, finally partitioning the territory was signed, the American community in Oregon totaled nearly seven thousand souls, almost ten times the total of scattered British colonies north of the Columbia.

It was a tardy colonizing movement on the part of individualistic American families, albeit a great and a speedy one. In a half-dozen years it occupied the two great farming valleys of the Pacific Northwest, the Willamette and the Walla Walla, both of them *south* of the Columbia. As late as 1846 practically no Americans had penetrated north of the river. Why did the advantage held by the Hudson's Bay Company go unchallenged for well-nigh twenty years? The Company had the initial leadership and drive which until the 1840's were utterly lacking on the American side. No one comparable to the Texan *empresarios* appeared to lead American families into the Oregon wilderness. No one appreciated the latter's value until it began to be publicized by returning missionaries and trappers and by newspapermen. Oregon began to be "news" in the late 1830's, after which it became a popular theme among Western Congressmen and editors. The depression in Western land values and prices for farm products that followed in the wake of the panic of 1837 probably furnished the immediate background. It was in February 1838 that the first bill to organize Oregon into a territory was introduced into Congress. This would have meant military occupation and a civil authority established in advance of actual colonization. It was sponsored by a Missouri Senator, Lewis F. Linn. Senator Linn also led a movement to grant six hundred and forty acres of land free in Oregon to each settler. His proposed measures failed of passage at the hands of Eastern and Southern Congressmen, but the emigration to Oregon nevertheless may well have been based in part on hopes of their ultimate success. For the same reason the pioneers congregated naturally south of the Columbia, where they could be more certain of having their titles confirmed when the country should be officially divided with Great Britain.

From the standpoint of actual development of the country, the Columbia was the natural line of division, and until 1843 at least there was some indication that it would be such. In fact the American government, chiefly under the influence of Daniel Webster in 1842, was interested in a tripartite division of the West Coast among the United States, Great Britain, and Mexico. Great Britain was to take everything north of the Columbia and the United States everything to the south as far as the thirty-sixth parallel. Such a division would give the two English-speaking powers all the important harbors on the Coast, the United States getting San Francisco and Monterey as well as free use of the Columbia. This plan went as far as a confidential sounding of the British government in 1842 at the time Webster was carrying on an important negotiation in Washington with Lord Ashburton; and it was conditioned upon British help in getting Mexican consent. Apparently, too, it implied a willingness to end the Texan question, including perhaps an American guaranty never to seek the annexation of Texas. Surely no bargain could have been entered into with either Mexico or Great Britain at that time unless that bugbear had been thoroughly disposed of. We know that Lord Ashburton expressed himself favorably at least to the United States' getting San Francisco, and that Tyler was ready to send Webster on a special mission to London for the purpose of arranging the matter. We know, moreover, that it was the country between the Columbia and San Francisco Bay in which Captain John C. Frémont, sent by President Tyler to explore in 1842, was chiefly interested. Webster was never favorable to Texas. Four years later, after both the Texas and the Oregon questions had been dealt with, but *before* California was acquired, he still saw San Francisco as the main goal. "You know my opinion to have been, and now is," he remarked to his son, "that the port of San Francisco would be twenty times more valuable to us than all Texas."

This interesting project for a tripartite division of the vast land west of the treaty lines of 1818-1819 experienced a sharp reversal in 1843. Tyler for reasons of his own took up the cause for the "re-annexation" of Texas, and his Secretary of State, Abel P. Upshur, a fellow Virginian, in October proposed to substitute the forty-ninth parallel for the Columbia River as the line of division in Oregon. Upshur, it will be remembered was the man who negotiated the annexation treaty of 1844 with Texas. Possibly it was with an eye to anticipating sectional controversy and opposition from the Northern states that he took up the cudgels for Oregon

at the same time. Upshur's demand for the forty-ninth as the dividing line made up in forceful argument whatever it lacked in soundness of fact. Oregon, he insisted,

lies contiguous to our settled country, and is a mere extension of our acknowledged boundaries. The natural spread of our population must cover it, without any direct effort, on our part, to settle or colonize it. It is important to our peace and security, that it should belong to us. It cannot be reasonably required of us to acquiesce in the settlement of a foreign Nation, which may become a hostile one, on an important part of our western border. . . .⁸

Upshur was mindful, no doubt, of the great migration of 1843, which was going on even as he wrote. He set this forth as "new proof" why the United States should have *all* of Oregon, but since previous American administrations had offered the forty-ninth as a compromise he agreed to be content with that. The character of the arguments employed by Upshur indicates that the issue was one of practical international politics, scarcely of abstract justice. The Secretary was simply capitalizing the sudden spurt to American emigration that was being felt in that year. Even so, we must not forget that the emigrants went *exclusively* to the country south of the Columbia. Upshur's arguments in behalf of the forty-ninth would have had at least as much weight if coming from the British contending for the Columbia. After the Secretary of State had thus secretly proposed to renew a compromise offer made twice previously, the President—the same who had the year previously lent an ear to Webster's project for a tripartite Division—had the temerity to assert in his annual message of December 1843 that "after the most rigid and . . . unbiased examinations of the subject" he was convinced we should have the *whôle* of Oregon!

The history of the forty-ninth parallel now requires a brief review. Because it was set forth in 1818 by John Quincy Adams as the line of division it was the northernmost boundary line the Americans could seriously hope to gain, short of conquest or purchase. When proposed again six years later Canning rejected it because it excluded Great Britain from the all-important part of the Coast, and the British Foreign Secretary offered in lieu the middle of the channel of the Columbia. In 1826 Canning amended this proposal so as to grant the United States the Olympic Peninsula, a triangle of land which lay between Puget Sound and Gray's Harbor to the south. This was to be an enclave, however, and not contiguous either to

⁸ Miller, *Treaties*, V, 23.

the hinterland or to the coast between Gray's Harbor and the Columbia. Its sole importance lay in the British recognition of the right of the United States to a more equitable division of the harbors. Webster and Tyler in their proposed tripartite agreement in 1842 expected to get the concession of this enclave. But Canning's proposition had not been acceptable in 1826 to Adams, who realized that the Olympic enclave would be exposed to attack in case of war and therefore refused to recede from the line of the forty-ninth. "Joint occupation" was therefore renewed in 1827 for a period of ten years and indefinitely thereafter, subject to a year's notice at the hands of either party. Reduced to simple realities, any permanent agreement, lacking war, would have to be made on the basis of either the American or the British idea of a boundary, the forty-ninth or the Columbia.

Thirsting for re-election to office, however, and ignoring the simple amenities of truth, President John Tyler recklessly declared himself in favor of the whole of Oregon. The germ of this abandonment of sweet reasonableness can be seen as far back as 1838-39 in the perhaps irresponsible efforts of Senator Linn of Missouri to excite opinion in favor of excluding the British from the whole of the country. The honorable Senator exclaimed in December 1839:

I would not be surprised that this [Oregon] question continued with that of Maine should lead to war between us and Great Britain. She rarely lets go her grasp, and is proud, boastful and insolent. The people of England will never respect us as we merit until we give them a right down good flogging. War is always a sad alternative, but let it come when it will, we must never leave it *until we drive our old enemy from the continent*, not even leaving them a spot of ground upon which they leave a footprint.⁴

This speech discloses an ideology often voiced throughout American history but never realizable—the idea that Britain must evacuate the whole of the continent if America is to be safe. *Total* expulsion of British dominion and British influence was to be the grand war aim of the United States, which would thus achieve permanent security. Those who held to it made no concealment of their expectation that sweeping annexations and establishment of an absolute hegemony over the continent by the United States would follow the desired British capitulation as surely as day follows night. Thus do concepts of security serve as springboards for programs of aggression.

⁴ Quoted from the Linn Papers by Melvin C. Jacobs, *Winning Oregon* (Caldwell, Idaho, 1938), p. 117.

The Oregon situation furnished an unusually fertile ground for rationalization of this kind. The question received its first great popular fillip in 1843. The important Webster-Ashburton Treaty, partitioning the disputed country in the Northeast, had recently been concluded, and rumors were already afloat regarding Webster's proposed tripartite division of the Pacific Coast. Determined to scotch such a plan, Western Senators set their caps for the whole of Oregon. Local meetings in the Western states, inspired by politicians on the lookout for a likely campaign issue, spread the movement. By the time the Democratic party convention foregathered at Baltimore in 1844 it was definitely identified with the Texas question, and thus the "re-occupation" of Oregon and the "re-annexation" of Texas became virtually the exclusive issues of the day. Party politicians and journalists built the bridge between the need for security and the need for the whole of Oregon. A Democratic assembly held in Cincinnati in July 1843 declared that "the rumored negotiation for a surrender of any part of Oregon for an equivalent in California was *dangerous to peace and a repudiation of Monroe's doctrine* 'that the American continents are closed to European colonization' . . ."

From this assertion it was an easy step to the breath-taking effusions of 1844-1846: the insistence by a committee of the Democratic convention "that our title to the *whole* Territory of Oregon is *clear and unquestionable* . . ."; the famous war whoop, "Fifty-four forty or fight," a slogan nothing short of a stroke of genius by Senator Allen of Ohio, the fire-eating chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, the toast offered by Senator Hannegan of Indiana, "Oregon—Every foot or not an inch; 54 degrees and forty minutes or *delenda est Britannia* [*sic*]"; and, finally, the divine revelation of "manifest destiny" as the "right . . . to overspread and to possess the whole of the continent which Providence has given us for the development of liberty and federated self-government entrusted to us . . ." An obscure Irishman in New York, John L. O'Sullivan, was the great "Revelator" of American manifest destiny, the supreme Law which conferred *true title* to all of Oregon and brushed aside all opposition to the "re-annexation" of Texas.

Such was the current generated by the fifty-four-forty men, as the radicals came to be called. It was chiefly a Western agitation, whipped up by Senators Allen of Ohio, Hannegan of Indiana, Cass of Michigan, and Atchison of Missouri, and Representative Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois. Naturally the Oregon pioneers were themselves infected with it, and were goaded by propaganda against the

Hudson's Bay Company for its alleged incitement of Indian raids. Governor Simpson recognized the danger very early, and Dr John McLoughlin, the Company's factor at Fort Vancouver, tried to dull the edge of American hostility by supplying provisions free to needy settlers. Nevertheless, the British officials had to face the disagreeable truth. "Every citizen of the United States, who knows the country even by name," Simpson reported, "contends we are intruders, and among the Willamet settlers few will be scrupulous as to the mode or means of asserting their imaginary rights." By 1843 work on a new base on Vancouver Island, well removed from possible scenes of hostility, was begun, and two years later the completed fort, Victoria, replaced the vulnerable Fort Vancouver as the Company's headquarters in the Northwest.⁵ This discreet step on the part of the Company helped the British government in its decision to retire to the Juan de Fuca Straits as the boundary essential for defense rather than the Columbia. Lord Aberdeen, the Foreign Secretary, had already reached the conclusion personally that it would be necessary to abandon the line of the Columbia and compromise on the forty-ninth parallel to the water's edge and thence down the middle of the strait to the sea. This was the line finally agreed upon after the smoke of "fifty-four-forty" had drifted away.

There was undoubtedly more smoke than fire, but it was long in dissipating. While the presidential campaign was in progress, every Democrat appeared to be a fifty-four-forty man. Polk took full advantage of the slogan, and even the wary Buchanan, while still a Senator, posed as a fifty-four-forty. Straightway the latter became Secretary of State he faced about and proved the most persistent worker in Polk's cabinet for compromise.

The situation was as follows in March 1845 when Polk entered office. the British government was officially committed to the line of the Columbia, but was secretly willing to retire to the forty-ninth, provided certain important details could be arranged—navigation

⁵ Fear of a surprise attack was not the only incentive, however. Simpson had long wanted a post better located than Fort Vancouver with reference to the trade with Sitka and the salmon and whale fisheries. For ten years he had been after the Russians to buy merchandise, grain, and hams from the Hudson's Bay Company; and finally in 1839 he and Baron Wrangell, the governor of the Russian-American Company, met in Hamburg, Germany, and struck a bargain. In the meantime surveys of the southern end of Vancouver Island had been started, and the directors in London had in 1837 approved the construction of a new depot. Donald C. Davidson, "Relations of the Hudson's Bay Company with the Russian-American Company on the Northwest Coast, 1829-1867," *British Columbia Historical Quarterly*, V (1941), 33-51; W. Kaye Lamb, "The Founding of Fort Victoria," *ibid*, VII, (1943), 71-92.

rights at least for a term of years to the Columbia River, full indemnification of the Hudson's Bay Company, and some practical arrangement for the use of the Straits of Juan de Fuca. The new American administration was deeply involved with the fifty-four-forty men, but was secretly anxious to compromise on the line of the forty-ninth. On July 12 Buchanan made the offer secretly to the British minister, Richard Pakenham. The latter's inconsiderate refusal, without reference to London, threw the whole question into a deadlock once again. Pakenham's action is almost incomprehensible in view of the fact that he already knew of Lord Aberdeen's attitude in the matter. Even so, the deadlock need not have continued long if President Polk had had any desire to dissolve it. Apparently Polk feared the power of the fifty-four-forties. Having been rebuffed by the British minister in Washington, there was nothing to prevent him from obtaining a response from the British government through the American minister in London, Louis McLane. But instead of encouraging negotiation in this way (which was what Pakenham expected him to do), Polk withdrew his offer. Then followed months of diplomatic sparring, into the details of which it is unnecessary to plunge. *Before* withdrawing his offer, the President had received a report from McLane that the British government was prepared to compromise on the forty-ninth. Accordingly he felt fairly safe in keeping up appearances of *hauteur* himself. He told his cabinet he would submit any proposition made by the British government to the Senate, allowing that body to decide on acceptance or rejection.

But months passed by with neither party making a direct move. In spite of his personal convictions Aberdeen hesitated to propose the forty-ninth. The traditional British stand was on the Columbia as the essential boundary. Even though the Hudson's Bay Company had proved by its action that this was a fallacy, it was not easy to make the official readjustment at once. The whole American election campaign had been one of bluster, and it was out of the question to give up immediately a position maintained steadfastly for more than twenty years.

The corner was turned in January 1846. By that time Lord Aberdeen had secured a pledge of support in favor of the compromise from the leader of the opposition party, Lord John Russell. Moreover, he won the editor of the *London Times* to his point of view. The latter's editorials supporting the cause of compromise gave the cue to British opinion. Meanwhile the Senate and the House of Representatives in Washington debated the question of giving the

year's notice required by the Treaty of 1827 to bring the period of "joint occupation" to an end. This protracted discussion pushed the fifty-four-forties more and more into the minority. For nearly five months the debate went on, accompanied by numerous consultations between the leading Senators on the one side and the British minister on the other. Buchanan also kept alert in the matter, and knew from McLane of the progress being made in England in favor of compromise.⁶ Finally, on April 2, the Senate voted the joint resolution to give due notice. This broke the deadlock that all informed persons had known for at least two months would be broken. The British proposal for compromise on the line of the forty-ninth reached Washington in the form of a draft treaty on June 6. Four days later Polk sent it to the Senate for advice, and the latter body after only two days advised acceptance by a vote of 38 to 12. The treaty was signed on June 15 in the precise form in which it had been received from London, was submitted to the Senate the next day, and the latter's advice and consent were secured by a vote of 41 to 14, a full vote except for one absence. On both occasions the Senate abandoned the customary practice of submitting questions of foreign affairs to its Committee on Foreign Relations and proceeded to a direct vote.

The alacrity with which the Senate and administration acted in June 1846 to solve the problem stands out in contrast to the partisan bellicosity of the preceding year. Polk did the unusual thing by practically abdicating his prerogative of conducting foreign affairs in favor of the Senate. It was in that body that the crucial decision was made. The moderates led by Calhoun, Webster, and Benton, who kept their feet on the ground and were more impressed by substantial boundary claims than by vague conceptions of "manifest destiny," at all times kept command of the situation. Least creditable of all was the part played by President Polk, who was strategically best situated to advance the cause of moderation and fair compromise. Polk knew positively of the British government's readiness

⁶ The British intended to stand firm on this compromise, however, and to accept eventualities if necessary. And since Polk had ignored the simple truth in his annual message to Congress in December 1845, they considered it possible he would launch a sudden attack. Early in February 1846 Aberdeen informed McLane that preparations would be made "not only for the defense and protection of the Canadas, but for offensive preparations. In the course of the conversation," McLane reported, "I understood that these would consist, independent of military armaments, of the immediate equipment of thirty sail of the line, besides steamers and other vessels of war." The warning seems to have had a sobering effect on Polk.

McLane's dispatch remained unpublished until 1937. See Miller, *Treaties*, V, 57-59, and also Julius W. Pratt, "James K. Polk and John Bull," *Canadian Historical Review*, XXIV, (1943), 341-49.

to compromise on the forty-ninth before the summer of 1845 was over, yet he refused on a point of etiquette to reopen the negotiations and in his annual message of December to Congress had the face to mislead the latter in the belief that Great Britain would make no compromise. Assuredly there is much truth in the ironical reference which Webster subsequently made to the situation:

Now, Gentlemen, the remarkable characteristic of the settlement of this Oregon question by treaty is this. In the general operation of government, treaties are negotiated by the President and ratified by the Senate, but here is the reverse,—here is a treaty negotiated by the Senate, and only agreed to by the President.⁷

Oregon was thus partitioned along practical lines and greatly to the advantage of the United States, whose claims to the land north of the Columbia were very slender from every standpoint. From the time of Canning all parties were sensitive to the importance of the seacoast. British policy until 1845 was motivated largely by the belief that the Columbia was a navigable inland waterway and that it must at least be shared if Britain was to have a part in the trans-Pacific trade. Lord John Russell, the leader of the Whig party, was not actually disabused of this belief until the end of that year. This seems to have been a material factor in alternating the British viewpoint. Actually, of course, the country was so divided as to leave the British with an almost equally good stake in the deep harbors of the coast. From the American viewpoint, moreover, the agreement of 1846 simply insured what had been sought for forty years, the window on the Pacific. Reference was made to this phase of the problem at the outset of this discussion. But there was another window on the Pacific—California, with its spacious bay of San Francisco—whose future was still in doubt. The same men who got the lion's share of the Oregon country were equally bent on forcing conclusions over the long stretch of coast to the south.

The Oregon treaty was concluded a little more than a month after the United States had been officially at war with Mexico. It has been held that a fear of war on two fronts accounts for the unusual haste with which the British proposal was accepted. But the debate and the desire for compromise had been matured well before the formal treaty proposal arrived. At one time Polk, whose natural bent seems to have been with the fifty-four-forties and who had little regard for the amenities of international intercourse, conceived the

⁷ Miller, *Treaties*, V, 89.

idea of negotiating for the *whole* of Oregon in return for the lowering of American tariffs on British goods.

The Treaty of June 15, 1846, recognized the possessory rights of the Hudson's Bay Company south of the forty-ninth and granted it free navigation of the Columbia River. One important detail that it was decided to pass over at the time was the matter of defining the "middle of the channel which separates the continent from Vancouver's Island." There were two channels: the Haro and the Rosario, with the San Juan Islands in between. The treaty failed to specify which channel was meant. Buchanan and Benton were aware of the omission, but considering the circumstances they did not raise the point. The Hudson's Bay Company established a sheep farm on the San Juan Islands in 1853, partly with the object of boosting the British claim. When American settlers began filtering in, the familiar friction soon appeared. Some American shot a company-owned pig, and when Governor Douglas ordered his removal to Victoria for trial the American commanding officer in Washington Territory in July 1859 invaded San Juan with 500 soldiers. Two British vessels of war took up a menacing position in turn. The authorities in Washington and London, however, speedily patched up the difficulties by arranging a "joint occupation" agreement. Nevertheless, twelve more years passed before a final adjudication of the difference could be reached. The question of the proper channel was finally referred to the German Emperor, and the latter in 1872 specified the Haro, or western channel. This gave the San Juan Islands to the United States.

CHAPTER 35

THE PENETRATION AND CONQUEST OF CALIFORNIA, 1840-1848

THE SITUATION in California at the time of crisis between the United States and Mexico was unique. In it a population of about twelve thousand whites, with the aid of an unknown number of Indians, had built up a peaceful and somewhat luxurious pastoral civilization. All except perhaps a thousand of the whites were natives of the country, being descendants of immigrants from Spain and Mexico. They could be found living like lotus-eaters on their broad

ranchos scattered all the way from San Diego in the south to as far north as Sonoma, beyond San Francisco Bay. At Sonoma lived General Mariano Vallejo, one of the greatest landholders of the north, a man of gentle manners and high character whose "fort" had once guarded the country from the Russians.

California was really sufficient unto itself, an outpost of old Spanish civilization with none but nominal bonds with Mexico. An attempt made by Governor Micheltorena in 1844 to tighten the bonds met with successful resistance, and thereafter the Californians enjoyed their liberty unchallenged, at least, by Mexico. There were two rival centers of authority, however, Los Angeles and Monterey. The former was the seat of the governor, Pio Pico, but the latter had the customhouse and was by far the more active community. Monterey was a port of call for ships from all over the Pacific. It had contact with Callao, Peru, Honolulu, Sitka, and Russian headquarters in Alaska, and, most of all, Boston, Massachusetts. The firm of Bryant & Sturgis of the latter city kept a resident agent in Monterey and carried on a profitable exchange of Yankee goods for California hides. Farther north was San Francisco, the smallest of the settlements, but one which men of foresight like Thomas O. Larkin, the well-to-do Yankee trader at Monterey who was made United States consul in 1843, expected to take the lead because of its great harbor. For a time the Hudson's Bay Company showed its interest in San Francisco by maintaining a trading post there.

Thus a marked variety of foreign interests were established in California. There was a small British resident population presided over by a vice consul, who hoped to convince his government of the wisdom of making the country a British protectorate. In this project he had the support of Governor Pio Pico, who realized the defenseless condition of the country and saw in British naval protection, which he besought in June 1846, the only safeguard against American conquest. Then there was a still smaller but equally ambitious French population. An interesting French visitor in 1841, Eugene de Mofras, took pains to measure the possibility of the Californians preferring French help on the score of racial and religious affinities. De Mofras visited Sutter, the German Swiss, on the latter's barony on the American River.

Neither the British nor the French influence was able to keep pace with the American, however. The Boston ships and the resident Yankee traders like Alfred Robinson, who was Bryant & Sturgis' representative, and Larkin were anxious to attract settlers and deliberately contemplated following the example of Texas. "Once

let the tide flow toward California," wrote Robinson in May 1845, "and the American population will be sufficiently numerous to play the Texas game." Organized parties had begun coming over the passes in 1841, and by 1845, when about five hundred arrived, the pace was definitely quickening. The years 1844-46 were especially favorable for the number of good books and articles published on California. A book was published by the guide, Lansford W. Hastings, another by Robinson, a number of articles were contributed to the New York papers by Larkin, and most important of all appeared the fascinating *Report* written by Captain John C. Frémont and his wife, Jessie, concerning his exploring expedition to California. Of Frémont's *Report*, a government publication, ten thousand copies were sold before it was taken up by private firms for numerous reprintings.

By 1846 the Americans in California numbered about a thousand—still only a twelfth of the white population, but a very aggressive, self-conscious minority. They could be found as far south as San Diego, but most of them tended to gather in the center of the Great Valley of the interior, near the meeting points of the Sacramento, American, and San Joaquin rivers. Two older ranches in this vicinity, that of the Yankee doctor, John Marsh, and that of Johann August Sutter, were the natural terminal points for the parties which came over the Sierra passes. Sutter held over sixty thousand acres, with advantageous river frontage, which he was developing with the aid of Kanaka, Indian, and white labor. Located at the crossroads of the valley, he enjoyed an enviable strategic position. A naturalized Mexican, he was the "Guardian of the Northern Frontier," and his fort mounted cannon purchased from the Russians at Fort Ross. When Governor Simpson of the Hudson's Bay Company visited him in 1842 he remarked: "If Sutter really has the talent and the courage to make the most of his position, he is not unlikely to render California a second Texas. . . ." Many of the Americans followed Sutter's example in taking out citizenship papers, which they could secure by simple request and without any oath of loyalty, and thus made themselves eligible to hold land. Grants were made of tracts of from one to eleven square leagues (5,760 acres to the square league), and as in Texas the grantee could select his own tract.

By this time there were several possibilities for a drastic political change. The native Californians were deeply disturbed over the growing American migration but were helpless to block it. Governor Pico hoped in vain to get British succor, and General Castro at

Monterey, expecting reinforcements from Mexico, commenced measures to defend the country east of San Francisco against further intrusion. The Americans on their part feared deprivation of their lands, and when Castro sent an armed party into the valley to collect horses, they precipitated matters by launching an attack on the party and then, at the instigation of Captain Frémont, marched against the pacific Vallejo, captured his "fort" at Sonoma, and raised the Bear Flag. The goal of these Americans, whose leader was a late arrival, William B. Ide, was an independent republic, the same as that which apparently Sutter and also the guide, Hastings, looked forward ultimately to attaining. Sutter and Hastings both appear to have had "presidential" ambitions, but neither had a hand in the Bear Flag Revolution.

The incident which brought the issues in California to a climax was the arrival from St. Louis, in March, 1846, of Captain John C. Frémont, leading a band of sixty-two sharpshooters. This was Frémont's third expedition to the Coast. He was supposed to be making a survey for a new route to Oregon via Sutter's, but instead of turning north at that point he and his band traveled south toward Monterey, and after being ordered from the country, withdrew slowly northward toward Oregon. Frémont's tactics were unmistakably temporizing: he expected news of war between the United States and Mexico, and he hoped to be in a position to reap immediate advantage of formal hostilities by undertaking the conquest of California. "My private instructions," he himself asserted, "were, if needed, to foil England by carrying the war now imminent with Mexico into the territory of California." Frémont was to be disappointed in not receiving word of the expected war, but nevertheless his was to be an important role in the conquest of the country. His reluctant withdrawal to the neutral ground in Oregon was suddenly arrested near the boundary by the arrival in May 1846 of a messenger from Washington. The messenger was Lieutenant A. H. Gillespie, who had left Washington the preceding November. Gillespie carried dispatches from the State Department to Consul Larkin, in which the latter was told to exert all his influence to persuade the native Californians to secede peacefully from Mexico, form a republic, and ask for admission to the United States. But the real purpose of Gillespie's mission is thought to have been to carry secret word to Frémont to so dispose his force as to be ready to attack the Californians, if necessary. The truth of this will never be known: Gillespie was forced to destroy his dispatches while traveling across Mexico; he himself denied having a secret message for Frémont, and no copy

of any such message has ever been found in Washington¹ But, with or without secret orders, it was Gillespie who caused Frémont to double back from Oregon and arrive in Sacramento Valley early in June just as the Bear Flag Revolt broke out

After the Bear Flaggers had captured Sonoma, Frémont took the command away from them, formed a California battalion of over two hundred men, and marched south to take Monterey. All this he did in ignorance of actual war which officially had been declared by Congress to exist "by act of Mexico" on May 13, 1846. Thus occurred the unprecedented situation of a United States Army officer assuming command of a band of rebels on foreign soil, merging it with his own force, which was still under the direction of the War Department in Washington, and making war on the constituted authorities of a country with which, so far as he knew, his government was still at peace After the capture of Monterey, Frémont in conjunction with Commodore Stockton took his force by boat to San Diego, whence they marched north to Los Angeles, which they entered unopposed, on August 13, 1846.

Frémont is the connecting link between the California rebels and the American government The chief goal of the latter under President Polk was the acquisition of California, after Texas had been brought into the Union The country had been an object of official interest since 1835, when the Jackson administration had made a belated gesture to include it in the attempted purchase of Texas. Later Jackson urged the Texan expansionists to conquer California so as to convince New England of the wisdom of annexing the whole country. The chief interest in California was centered in its spacious harbors and its outlook on the Pacific. Larkin expressed the common view that from San Francisco Bay, which could hold all the vessels in the world then afloat, the "Anglosaxon race" would soon send their exports over the whole Pacific Ocean. "It must, will be," he continued, "the medium stopping place from New Orleans and New York to the China Ports now open to all the world."

Prospects of acquiring California did not arouse the sectional outcry experienced in the Texan problem, and the American administration acted on the assumption that "it was impossible for Mexico, situated as things then were, to have retained possession" This was the opinion held by Polk and George Bancroft, the Secretary of the Navy, the two who were most aggressive in pushing matters to a

¹ Gillespie's mission has been the subject of minute historical investigation There is strong reason to believe that he carried an oral message from Polk or Secretary of the Navy Bancroft, or from both, to Frémont.

conclusion. But they also gambled that unless they took drastic steps to acquire California themselves it would go to Great Britain or France as a protectorate. This was an utterly false assumption—for such a possibility did not go beyond the idle schemes of a few British and French subjects on the Coast—but it was the assumption which forced the pace.

Unmistakably Polk assumed from the early days of his administration that there was going to be a showdown with Mexico, and he formulated his policies accordingly. In June 1845 he dispatched orders to Sloat, in command of the Pacific squadron, to cruise near Monterey and occupy the town at the first news of war. In October the Secretary of State, Buchanan, who was hoping to see the ends accomplished peacefully, sent instructions to Consul Larkin to promote good feeling among the Californians for the United States in the hope that they would revolt and set up a republic after the Texas manner. Apparently Buchanan did not grasp the impracticability of this method of approach. In the same month John Slidell was dispatched to Mexico City, with an offer to purchase California for a maximum of twenty-five millions. Furthermore, Frémont's party left from St. Louis about the same time and Commodore Stockton was ordered to proceed from the Gulf of Mexico to reinforce Sloat in the Pacific.

Thus the cards were stacked to meet any emergency. The attempt to negotiate a purchase through John Slidell turned out a failure, as Polk perhaps anticipated it would. Polk made up his mind for war on May 8, 1846, on the general ground of forcing a redress of grievances from Mexico. Then came word of a Mexican attack on the American Army under command of General Taylor, which occurred near the Rio Grande on ground disputed with Mexico. This was the overt act for which Polk had so far waited in vain. It gave him a reason for demanding the war upon which he had already resolved. In this way a revolution begun by Americans in California in ignorance of hostilities going on a thousand miles away became merged in the general conflict. California was the one great prize of war, and while it is impossible to wring from the documents an admission that a direct attack upon Mexico was intended, it is equally impossible to see any other purpose in the diplomatic and military maneuvers that took place between May 1845 and May 1846. Polk was willing enough to buy California, but failing this he was bent on finding pretexts for obtaining it otherwise. In the succession of coincidences he was unusually fortunate in preserving the appearances, if not the realities, of good faith.

CHAPTER 36

CONQUESTS OF THE MEXICAN WAR,
1846-1848

THE KEY TO THE CAUSE of the Mexican war was the resolve of the administration of James K. Polk to possess California and the territory known as New Mexico, which lay between the great coastal province and the existing western boundary of the United States.¹ Such a princely acquisition would close the gap between American territory and the Pacific Ocean and give the United States the long-coveted harbor of San Francisco. Added to the advantages to be won from the expected division of Oregon, it would give the United States the best part of the Pacific Coast and the mastery of the transoceanic trade in which California was even then an important cog. The urgency of the need for action was conditioned by a belief, rooted partly in observation and experience, partly in the imagination, that the affairs of California were approaching a crisis and that if America proved unequal to the occasion that precious colony would be taken under the wing of Great Britain. Such an outcome would be disastrous to both the transoceanic and the continental ambitions of this country. Therefore the issue must be forced.

Our previous studies, particularly those on Texas, Oregon, and California, give us the clue to the situation. The diplomatic contest for Texas had been close and Great Britain had lost early in the year 1845 only by a narrow margin. The Oregon question was highly combustible, although the American administration was ready to retreat from its extreme position. With reference to California the strategic and diplomatic position of the British was in many respects as good, if not better, than the American. British diplomacy was in favor in Mexico, and British emissaries in California were known to be promoting the idea of a British protectorate. There was at least the possibility of a deal on the subject, and a cruising British squadron in the Pacific was fit to make the deal good. These were the known facts. Actually they were more than offset by a factor that Americans were unaware of, or at least unwilling to admit to

¹ The western boundary in 1846 was the treaty line of 1818 plus Texas, whose boundaries with Mexico were in dispute.

themselves: the essential conservatism of British foreign policy—its concentration on the status quo, its deafness to the occasional importunities of British subjects abroad, and its explicit rejection of the dream of a California protectorate. Full appreciation of this *controlling* factor would have made it possible for the American government to make haste more slowly.

The problem at hand is to make clear the connection between the Californian aspirations of the United States and the immediate issues which precipitated war with Mexico. Relations with that country were (and for that matter, have generally been) chronically explosive, especially during the decade of Texan independence. The Mexicans sought to bluster the United States out of annexing Texas by declaring that such a step would be an act of war. "We announce hereby," they said in August 1843, "that the Mexican Government will consider equivalent to a declaration of war against the Mexican Republic the passage of an act [by the American Congress] for the incorporation of Texas with the territory of the United States, the certainty of the fact being sufficient for the immediate proclamation of war." Nothing in the record indicates that this or subsequent threats acted as a deterrent to American annexation, although Mexico actually appears to have been confident of an easy victory. Her generals, who were the only leaders she knew, pretended they could sap the strength of the United States on the remote deserts of Texas. On the American part, what Justin Smith so aptly terms the "intoxication of animal vitality," so rife in 1845-46, insisted on a fight somewhere. "The multitude cry aloud for war," averred the *New York Herald* in August 1845. Britain was apparently the chief object of this lightheadedness at that time; but when thought was sobered by the lapse of time and the guidance of careful diplomacy in the Oregon crisis, there still remained Mexico. Immediately the joint resolution in favor of annexing Texas passed Congress in March, the Mexican minister retired from Washington. The war which the Mexicans had so loudly threatened, however, failed to develop, and the Mexican army prudently remained at Matamoros on the south side of the Rio Grande, definitely outside of the area in dispute. The latter was the country between the Nueces and the Rio Grande which the Texans asserted was rightfully theirs. Conservative students of the boundary, like Thomas Hart Benton, denied the validity of the Texan claim, but President Polk prepared to cast legal niceties aside in full support of Texas. So long as *neither* side moved its armed forces to the disputed ground, however, there could be no pretext for attack by the other.

There was one other provocative factor in Mexican-American relations—the unpaid claims of private American citizens against the Mexican government for damage done them on Mexican soil. These were cumulative over a long period of years, especially after 1835. A mixed commission in 1841 had awarded two million dollars to the claimants, less than half of the total, and after two years' further delay the two governments had signed an agreement for payment in quarterly installments over a period of five years. Mexico had paid three installments and then stopped. Such exasperating conduct could, of course, be made a *casus belli* if the American government so wished. Andrew Jackson had once used a bellicose tone on the subject but had allowed the dispute to taper off in circumlocutions. Polk spoke bitterly and at length upon the subject in his annual message of December 2, 1845. But while we may give due weight to the honest indignation of the President against Mexican equivocations, the sequence of events prevents any assumption that this phase of the problem was serious. On the contrary, it is quite legitimate to assume that the President spoke on the awards with some malice aforethought. By that time the prospect of war was good. What could be more tempting to the President than to retail the story of the unpaid awards so wrathfully as to stir the popular passion for war?

There were three distinct stages in American diplomacy between May 1845 and May 1846 which led to war. The first stands revealed through the *Memoranda* of Anson Jones, president of the Texan Republic, and through the secret reports of Andrew J. Donelson, the American minister to Texas. Donelson and three others, whom Polk had sent out as his confidential agents, hatched a plan to force a fight. The Texan authorities, they hoped, would co-operate in organizing an armed expedition for the invasion of the country on the farther side of the Nueces. The Mexicans could be attacked at Matamoros. The American forces under Commodore Stockton, who had arrived off Galveston and who was privy to the plot, would then support them; and Texas, when she finally entered the Union, would bring a war with her. President Jones records:

I naturally turned with disgust and abhorrence from a proposition of Mr. Polk's through Com. S——n, "that I should manufacture a war for the United States." . . . The anxiety of Mr. Polk for a pretext for a war with Mexico had been known to me for some time, through the agency of employees of the Texan Government at Washington City. That he was predetermined to have a war with that country so soon as a pretext was found I also well knew, and that such also was the feeling

of a large party in the United States. . . . I thought, if she felt such cause existed, she should make the war *herself*, upon the right grounds.²

This conspiracy on the part of Stockton, Donelson, and the other emissaries in Texas is not a matter of doubt. Their plans, moreover, included the seizure of the northern states of Mexico, which lay *beyond* the Rio Grande. The documents do not so clearly define the trail from them back to their superiors in Washington, although Jones understood that Polk favored the scheme. At any rate from the outset the President took the attitude that the Rio Grande was indisputably the boundary of Texas and told his agents to "protect" that country accordingly. Whether or not he personally devised the scheme, his attitude to say the least encouraged a conspiracy of that sort. The fact that Jones was an anti-annexationist and refused to provoke Mexico frustrated the scheme.

The second stage was the special mission of John Slidell, dispatched by Polk to Mexico City in November 1845 to see if the Mexicans could be induced to meet *all* the American demands peaceably. Polk had been informed in advance that the Mexican government (which, it must be remembered, had broken off diplomatic relations in the preceding March) would receive his envoy. But upon Slidell's arrival the Mexican president seized upon a technicality to refuse an interview, and Slidell sent in a report, which reached Polk early in January 1846, of the utter futility of his mission. Slidell had been told to stand pat on the Rio Grande as the western boundary of Texas but to try to arrange a purchase of New Mexico on the basis of five million dollars plus the assumption by the American government of the unpaid Mexican claims. The *coup de grace* of his mission was to be an offer to buy California for twenty or twenty-five millions, depending upon the sale of a part or the whole of the province and upon whether or not the assumption of the claims was to be considered as part payment. The substance of Slidell's rather involved instructions was just this: pay a maximum

² Anson Jones, *Memoranda and Official Correspondence relating to the Republic of Texas, Its History and Annexation* (New York, 1859), pp. 46-47. Elsewhere (p. 47) Jones repeats his assertion that he resisted "all importunities to *manufacture* a war for the United States. . . . If [the United States] wanted redress for wrongs of twenty years' continuance inflicted by [Mexico], she should not have had the meanness to have requested Texas to bring about the collision."

Jones admits that the Texans were ready for war, and that the expedition requested by Stockton could easily be raised for an attack on Matamoros. But he decided to temporize until Captain Elliott should have returned from Mexico City with the expected recognition. He blames Polk and General Taylor (the latter unjustly) for deliberately causing the war.

of thirty million dollars and assume the unpaid claims in return for the cession of all of California and New Mexico, assume the claims and pay twenty millions for whatever part of California could be got, including, however, at least San Francisco and Monterey; or assume the claims and pay five millions for the cession of New Mexico alone. Clearly the administration was bent on forcing a minimum cession of fresh territory while refusing even to discuss the question of the Rio Grande. This was a gesture of peace. It showed the influence of the temporizing Secretary of State, James Buchanan. It must be balanced against the instructions to Commodore Sloat, written in the preceding June by the more warlike Secretary of the Navy, George Bancroft, and against what appear to have been secret instructions to Captain Frémont in California. Sloat, and perhaps Frémont, had been told to seize California as soon as they heard of the outbreak of war. How seriously Polk himself took Slidell's mission, whether he really expected results from it or regarded it as a screen for his own belief in the "inevitability" of war and his own determination to make war, has never been ascertained. Historians who have wished to depict a "peaceable Polk" have made the most of this mission.

The third and final preliminary to the war was the sending of an American army under General Zachary Taylor into Texas. Had the purpose been one of defense alone the expedition would have been unexceptionable. But Taylor was told in one breath to defend the country as far as the Rio Grande and yet to remain "near" the Nueces. Whether or not this was really a hint to the general to advance to the Rio Grande, Taylor taking the responsibility if things went askew, may be a matter of dispute. At any rate he remained literally near the Nueces, at Corpus Christi on its farther bank, for over half a year. In the meantime Polk sent Slidell on his bootless mission, and on January 13, 1846, having received the news of Slidell's failure, finally sent categorical orders to Taylor to advance to the Rio Grande. The latter did so, took up his post in full sight of the Mexican garrison at Matamoros, and, when ordered by the Mexican commander to leave the country, replied by blockading the river. The Mexican force then crossed the stream and launched an unsuccessful attack. This happened on April 24 and was reported in Washington on the evening of May 9. Polk was able to make effective use of the incident in the war message which he wrote the next day but which, according to the admission of his own Diary, he and the entire cabinet, with some demurring from the more cautious members, had agreed upon *before* the news of the

Mexican attack had arrived. Thus the decision for war was made in ignorance of an overt act by the enemy and the timely arrival of the information furnished welcome opportunity for depicting the war as one of self-defense. Mexico, in Polk's words,

has passed the boundary of the United States, has invaded our territory and shed American blood upon the American soil. . . . As war exists, and, notwithstanding all our efforts to avoid it, exists by the act of Mexico herself, we are called upon by every consideration of duty and patriotism to vindicate with decision the honor, the rights, and the interests of our country.³

Just how Polk had intended to justify his demand for war without the alibi so opportunely furnished him by the messenger from the front his Diary fails to disclose. The important thing, of course, was that he had already developed a frame of mind where "but one course towards Mexico was left to the United States, and that was to take the redress of the wrongs and injuries which we had so long borne from Mexico into our own hands and act with promptness and energy."⁴

In few wars do the concessions finally extorted from the defeated enemy tally so closely with the original war aims of the victor as in the case of the Mexican War. Polk knew exactly what he wanted and was ready to make peace at any moment the Mexicans would agree to his terms. These were, with one or two minor exceptions, what he had told Slidell to get by diplomacy: the recognition of the Rio Grande boundary and the cession of California and New Mexico. By California he meant *Upper* California, with the southern boundary drawn in such a way as to include the harbor of San Diego. To him the peninsula of Lower California was desirable but not indispensable. New Mexico, as we have said, meant all of the land intervening between California and the United States, not merely the present state of New Mexico.

It was not long before the war swung decisively in the American favor. Commodores Sloat and Stockton, with the help of Frémont, had California at their feet before the end of August, 1846. An expedition under General Kearny marched west from St. Louis, captured Santa Fé, the key to New Mexico, and arrived in southern California in the fall in time to put down a counter-rebellion of the Californians and conduct a general "mopping up" campaign in that

³ Richardson, V, 2288-93

⁴ These words appear in the Diary under the date May 8, 1846, after Polk had talked with Slidell but before the news from the Rio Grande

province Taylor penetrated into the heart of northern Mexico, and another army under General Scott was transported to Vera Cruz, whence it started on a march against the capital city.

It was on April 15, 1847, following word of Scott's successful landing, that Polk appointed Nicholas P. Trist, chief clerk of the State Department, to accompany the army as peace commissioner. Trist caught up with Scott, and by August the military situation was such that he was able to open negotiations with the Mexicans. The latter wanted to neutralize the land between the Rio Grande and the Nueces and to avoid the outright cession of any territory. They actually maneuvered Trist into admitting the Nueces as the boundary. For this and for other marks of leniency on his part Polk ordered him to return, and the war meanwhile was prosecuted until Mexico City was occupied by Scott and his men on September 14.

These events on the distant battle front were anticipated at home by a growing cry for the whole of Mexico. It was one of those chronic enthusiasms of manifest destiny so lustily supported in the West and not infrequently re-echoed on the Atlantic seaboard. But the rapid disintegration of constituted authority throughout Mexico in 1847 gave it real point. For instance, the *National Whig*, a paper loyal to General Taylor, declared in November that

for the peace and quiet of this land [Mexico], for the happiness of these people, and to end the effusion of human blood, the United States, from this day forward, ends the war—assumes the entire conquest of Mexico—annexes it to the United States.

And a Democratic journal, the *Philadelphia Ledger*, asserted

We must be prepared for a bold move, such as will place the military chieftains of Mexico entirely *hors du combat*, and that . . . *will be the final subjugation and annexation, after a certain period, of all Mexico.*

The Wilmot Proviso, declaring opposition to the introduction of slavery in any territory acquired from the war, threw a wet blanket over the movement. Western slaveholders, like the Senators from Mississippi, remained unaffected, but the conservative leaders of the old South, Democrats as well as Whigs, took alarm. "The great object at this time," wrote James Gadsden of South Carolina to Calhoun, January 23, 1848, "is to arrest the mad designs of Conquest; involving the still more dreaded but unavoidable policy, if the first succeeds, of the Annexation of the whole of Mexico, in

states to the Union. . . ."⁵ It was this coalition which successfully braked the movement

Meanwhile Fortune's wheel turned in favor of Trist. Although repudiated by the President and therefore having no official standing, that hapless agent found the Mexicans ready to bow to the American terms after the fall of their capital city. Urged to stay, despite the President's orders, by General Scott and also by the officials of the British legation, Trist concluded and signed on February 2, 1848, at Guadalupe Hidalgo a treaty which conformed quite closely with the instructions originally handed him. California and New Mexico became American by this treaty for a consideration of fifteen million dollars, and the Rio Grande the recognized boundary.

Polk behaved judiciously. Since Trist's departure in April 1847 his own appetite for territory had grown. He now felt that he should have at least part of Mexico's northern provinces, dropping the boundary south as far as the Sierra Madre Mountains. But he realized that to reject Trist's bargain would be to jeopardize all. He wrote in his Diary.

I looked . . . to the consequences of its rejection. A majority of one branch of Congress is opposed to my administration; they have falsely charged that the war was brought on and is continued by me with a view to the conquest of Mexico, and if I were now to reject a Treaty made upon my own terms, as authorized in April last, with the unanimous approbation of the Cabinet, the probability is that Congress would not grant either men or money to prosecute the war. Should this be the result, the army now in Mexico would be constantly wasting and diminishing in numbers, and I might at last be compelled to withdraw them, and thus loose [sic] the two Provinces of New Mexico & Upper California, which were ceded to the U.S. by this Treaty . . .⁶

For these reasons Polk sent the treaty to the Senate and obtained the approval of that body on March 10, 1848. The treaty unquestionably saved Mexico from total anarchy and further dismemberment. Separatist movements had already been nourished in the northern provinces and in Yucatan. An agent from the latter was in Washington trying to play off the British legation against the Department of State in the hope of getting either one or the other to declare a protectorate over his country. Its nearness to the strategic Isthmus of Tehuantepec was the bait.

As for the United States, no one has ever appraised the treaty

⁵ Extracts quoted by J. D. P. Fuller, *The Movement for the Acquisition of All Mexico, 1846-1848*, John Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science, LIV (Baltimore, 1936)

⁶ Miller, *Treaties*, V, 247

better than Polk. "If the Treaty in its present form is ratified," he wrote, "there will be added to the U.S. an immense empire, the value of which 20 years hence it would be difficult to calculate, & yet [he pointedly added] Democratic and Whig Senators disregard this, and act solely with the view to the elevation of themselves or their favourites to the Presidential office!"

CHAPTER 37

ALASKA AND THE QUEST FOR CANADA, 1867-1871

ONE OF THE OLDEST and most persistent but yet vain quests in the gallery of American expansion projects was the periodic movement to annex the neighboring British provinces. Twice the attempt was made in war—during the Revolution and again in the War of 1812. At the close of each of these conflicts the Americans, though their invasions had failed, were audacious enough to put the cession of the provinces on their peace agenda. To the British it was gravely recommended that their evacuation of the continent—indeed of the hemisphere—was the surest avenue to lasting peace between the two nations. Failing thus to make an impression, the Americans by no means admitted that Canada was permanently lost. The annexation of British North America was among the fondest dreams of Manifest Destiny—being natural affinities of the United States, the colonies to the north would eventually so will it themselves. They were the choicest of the ripening fruit on the American tree of destiny.

Twice the fruit seemed about to drop: in 1837 when there was a short-lived insurrection; and a dozen years later, when Canada felt the full effect of a change in the British tariff system, depriving her of her privileged position as a wheat grower for the mother country. Whenever Canada appeared to be under a strain, American voices were raised in prophecy of early annexation. Considering the comparative weakness and isolation of the British Colonies, the prophecy was hardly a farfetched one. But British institutions were rooted deeply in Canadian soil, and few Canadians wished to be

¹ *Ibid.*, 249.

falling fruit Even Mackenzie, the rebel leader of Upper Canada in 1837, returned from a sojourn in the United States completely cured of annexationist notions The bitter jealousy and oft-voiced hatred of Great Britain that formed part of the stuff of Manifest Destiny in the 1840's sharpened the Canadian resolution to go their own way, uniting in 1840, the two Canadas made genuine strides toward self-government; and annexation, never a real issue in Canada, was pushed year by year farther into the background

One of the shrewdest steps away from annexation was taken in 1854, under the guidance of the able governor-general, Lord Elgin The surest road to Canadian prosperity lay in obtaining a free market below the border The British government had been vainly trying since 1846 to persuade the United States to enter a reciprocity agreement; protectionist influences in this country repeatedly blocked the appeal, but now Elgin played a deft hand The two great favors which the British had it in their power to bestow were the use of the St Lawrence River by American vessels from the Great Lakes and of the inshore fisheries of the Maritime Provinces by fishermen from New England Elgin cheered the Middle West by pledging the opening of the St Lawrence, and he agreed to reopen the fisheries after they had been legally closed for many years Southern Senators, anxious to steer away from the annexation issue, agreed with the British governor-general that commercial reciprocity, by improving the Canadian position economically, would make annexation more remote, and they supported the treaty Their judgment proved to be sound, the Reciprocity Treaty of 1854 was a genuine charter of Canadian political independence Canada was not again exposed to the danger of incorporation in the American Union until the close of the Civil War.

There were two circumstances which revived the quest for Canada after 1865 in a form perhaps more virulent than ever before One was the gratuitous and unexpected opportunity presented by Russia in her eagerness to sell Alaska to the United States, the other was the clamor raised in the victorious North by bitter and revengeful voices against Great Britain Charging premature and unjustifiable recognition of the belligerency of the Southern Confederacy in 1861, American sentiment fanatically singled out the British for blame in prolonging the Civil War The argument sounded plausible: Britain had given the rebels both moral comfort and material aid She had held out to them the hope of full recognition of their independence and had assisted them with ships and supplies in weakening the Union blockade of the South Worst

of all had been the ravages of shipping on the high seas by the Confederate ship "Alabama" and her sister raiders, built in England and allowed to escape from their berths in supposed violation of British neutrality.

So ran the charges. Britain was to foot the bill for at least half of the war. The bill was to be paid, not in cash, but by cession of Canada. This is not to say that the charges against the British government were simulated, or that there was hypocrisy in the wave of bitterness that tossed the United States in its bosom after the war. The American people were in need of a scapegoat; British policy had worn the appearance of unneutrality, and, as the most powerful neutral, Britain had been in a position to make the war long and arduous for the North.

The men who were most bitter in their demands for indemnity were also willing victims of wishful thinking in the matter of Canada. They did not, for the most part, propose a war of conquest against the provinces, but they were profound believers in the traditional doctrine that American Manifest Destiny concerned the entire continent of North America. In the acquisition of Alaska they saw a telling move toward the main goal. Of itself, the "dismissal of one more monarch from the Continent," as Senator Sumner floridly characterized the Alaska purchase, was a step of no mean dimensions. But Canada more than Alaska was in the mind and heart of Sumner and his fellow Continentalists; it was next door, and the craving for the supposedly ripening fruit had long been unsatisfied. Or they could, if they chose, look on the provinces as a thorn in the side of the American Union. Was Canada not the source of troublesome Confederate raids on helpless American communities during the war?

All this and more made up the stuff of propaganda which the fanatical advocates of the indirect claims against Great Britain, led by Sumner, set forth in a determined effort to make the British surrender their portion of the continent. For the first time since 1812 it was possible to convert an attitude of passive waiting for Canada into a program of positive action. She was to be crowded into the Union, and Alaska was a strategic possession of high value in realizing the long-deferred hope. "A visible step in the occupation of the whole North American continent," was the way in which Sumner voiced his satisfaction with the Alaska treaty.¹ And Seward, the man who clutched at the opportunity offered by the Russians

¹ Charles Sumner, *Works*, XV, 1-169

in March 1867, influenced his President, Andrew Johnson, to declare that "The acquisition of Alaska was made with the view of extending national jurisdiction and republican principles in the American hemisphere."²

Seward's political acumen was far keener than that of the Massachusetts Senator, Sumner. He grasped the value of Alaska's strategic location: it was the backdoor to the Canadian West; it was also a thrust into the Pacific, for a share in the control of which the Secretary of State had a keen eye. But Seward was not the man to be bemused by the exaggerated possibilities of indirect claims. This was never made an issue by him. Seward had no precise program for winning the British provinces to the fold. The lucky chance of getting Alaska was merely a step in the general direction; it was the working out of destiny.

The bigoted chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, however, working himself into a rage against the British in April 1869 over wrongs they were supposed to have committed a half-dozen years before, hit on a program of his own for sweeping all of British North America into the American embrace. With Seward gone from office and Hamilton Fish, the new Secretary of State, hardly initiated in his post, Sumner snatched the control of foreign policy from the hands of the Executive and led the public astray on a dangerous scent. Fellow bigots and rabble rousers among the Radical Republicans in Congress joined in the hue and cry, and the signals were set for a wave of national passion that, unless otherwise checked, could be assuaged only by a war for the conquest of Canada.

Some there were who were brazen enough to advocate taking this road and exploiting the full military power which the United States had gained during the Civil War. President Grant was one of these, and so was Nathaniel P. Banks, chairman of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs. Sumner was not among them, however, though he remained to the end a victim of his own delusions. The indirect claims were not founded on sound principles of public law; Britain was not, by any test, obliged to compensate the United States by delivering over Canada even had she the power to do so. The point is, however, that the foreign-relations committee chairman thoroughly believed she was. He rested his case on two basic fallacies: the willingness of the British to be browbeaten out of Canada, and the political weakness and disunity of the Canadian

² Richardson, VIII, 3886

provinces His bigotry dulled his political sagacity. The steps the Canadians were meanwhile taking toward union among themselves and mastery of their portion of the continent escaped his notice.

We have now stated the problem. Alaska was the lucky chance; there was no popular quest for Russian America, no deep-seated historical tradition in connection with it. In a vague, undefined sort of way, of course, Alaska came within the scope of Manifest Destiny. It was part of the North American continent extension of American dominion over which was of the essence of popular ideas of expansion. But the land was remote, and after the treaty of 1824, by which Russia retreated behind the line of fifty-four forty, the United States was hardly aware of the fur-trading empire of the far north. So far as known, the only contacts with it were had by a few merchants and fishermen on the Pacific Coast. True, Senator William Gwyn of California made himself an advocate of purchasing Alaska in 1854. He was one of the first Americans to grasp its value; his fellow Californians wanted it for its deep-sea fisheries, from which the Treaty of 1824 excluded them; and Gwyn also thought it could be made a gate to the Orient. But Gwyn entered the picture only after the Russian minister at Washington, Mr. Stoeckl, had suggested the transaction to him. Stoeckl took his cue from Count Muraviev, the governor of Eastern Siberia, who wished his countrymen to retire from North America and concentrate on developing the Amur Valley, adjacent to China. Alaska was too exposed a colony for Russia. The trading company which managed it was no match for its successful British neighbor, the Hudson's Bay Company, it had shown losses for many years; and its stations scattered along the coast could be throttled at any time by patrolling British naval vessels. Russia and Britain were far from being the best of friends during these years; their differences focused in the Mediterranean, but there was nothing to stop the British from pinching out the Russian posts in far-away Alaska if they chose. It took some years to convince the Imperial authorities at St. Petersburg; but by the time the American Civil war was over they were thoroughly converted to Muraviev's view: Russia's destiny was in Asia; the sale of Alaska would be a good defensive move; it would please the United States and make that country a buffer on the flank of British North America.

The Russian minister had little trouble in attracting Seward to the bait. The Secretary of State was ignorant of the earlier conversations in which the California Senator had been involved, but a hint thrown out through a mutual friend was enough to pique

his curiosity Having spoken previously in general terms of the desirability of Alaska, he needed no prodding once he became aware of an opening The annexation of Russian America partially met the expectations of dominion over the continent which Seward fondly harbored Seven years before he had publicly prophesied that both the Russians and the Canadians were building future states of the American Union; here was no mean part of the prophecy about to come true The Secretary of State was so eager a buyer that he kept the amiable Stoeckl up until four o'clock in the morning of March 30 at the State Department to put the finishing touches on the treaty The bidding had been simple Seward had started at five million and then by taking leaps of half a million at a time had climbed to the figure which Stoeckl had named in the first instance—seven million dollars An additional two hundred thousand was even thrown in for good measure

The Secretary had excellent luck with the Senate, despite the fact that that body was taken by surprise The negotiations with Stoeckl had been cloaked with secrecy, moreover, Seward was anything but a popular figure with the Senators at that time: as a member of the Johnson administration he was a marked man But he had the support of the powerful chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations, Charles Sumner, whose three-hour speech on April 7 clinched the matter in favor of the treaty The press indulged in a good deal of good-natured raillery about "Seward's Ice Box," but nevertheless lent a willing ear to the evidence supplied by the Secretary that Alaska was a land of hidden riches Sumner devoted most of the time in his speech to this phase of the argument, and the treaty won a resounding vote of 37 to 2 in the Senate only ten days after it had been submitted.

Seward and the friends of the treaty assembled all the possible reasons they could discover to prejudice the country in their favor The economic argument was good, and they made the most of it They also appealed effectively to the popular sense of gratitude to Russia for the alleged favors she had shown the Union during the war, even though Russia had really done nothing to earn the gratitude But there was a popular myth to that effect: the Russians had sheltered their fleets in American harbors in 1863 and had even given out unofficially that they were ready to aid in defending Union ports against Confederate raiders Fortunately the Confederates occasioned them no embarrassment; the truth is the Russian vessels had fled from Europe when a war scare over Poland made it dangerous for them to remain in waters dominated by the British fleet.

Considerations of sentiment and economic opportunity were made so much of that they must have made an impression. They were got up by Seward after he had signed the treaty, and were plainly meant for that purpose. Sumner too saw their value and exploited them to the utmost; they were repeated also at great length in the House of Representatives, which showed an exasperating disposition to withhold the money. The American government took possession of Alaska in October 1867, thus making it extremely embarrassing for Congress to refuse the appropriation. Nevertheless the representatives held out until the following July, having voiced their displeasure at the implied attack upon their constitutional control over the purse. Stoeckl, apparently with Seward's knowledge, helped some of them make their decisions by pledging gifts from the purchase money he hoped to see voted.⁸ No doubt the motive for acquiring Alaska was rationalized in many ways. But for Seward and also for Sumner, who were the guiding spirits, the purchase was a heaven-sent opportunity to pry loose the hold of the British lion on North America and make good the dream of a great continental American empire.

It was Sumner who became resolved to turn the final screw on the British. His chance came in April 1869, just two years after he had put on the gloves for Alaska. Seward had made a half-hearted attempt to extract an indemnity from Great Britain for the alleged damage that nation had inflicted on the Union cause. His envoy, Reverdy Johnson, finally returned from London in the spring of 1869, just as the administration of Andrew Johnson was leaving office; Reverdy Johnson brought an offer of a claims convention, in which it was agreed to arbitrate claims of each nation against the other over a previous number of years. There was nothing in the agreement to distinguish the grievances of the United States from ordinary private claims, such as the two nations had been accustomed to settle by means of a claims commission since 1794. But this was not a case of seeking ordinary redress for injury to private property—so the Americans felt. The "Alabama" and her sister raiders,

⁸ Congress appropriated and the Treasury paid \$7,200,000 but the bank draft which Stoeckl transmitted to St Petersburg was only for \$7,035,000 less the commission, and \$165,000 remained on deposit to the credit of the Russian minister. Proof of Stoeckl's dispensations from this fund is limited to circumstantial evidence; but a generation of Congressmen who could be involved in the infamous Grant scandals is hardly likely to have been squeamish about accepting a few donations out of the Alaska money. See W. A. Dunning, "Paying for Alaska. Some unfamiliar Incidents in the Process," *Political Science Quarterly*, XXVII (1912), 385-98.

which the British government had allowed to sail from its ports, had had remarkable success on the seven seas against Northern shipping; they had sunk much tonnage and had frightened even more into transferring to foreign registry and thus seeking the protection of other flags. The amount of damage thus caused was easily computable, at least that part that was represented by actual sinkings. The sum claimed to cover the latter type of losses was fifteen million dollars. Such losses had, of course, been incurred by private owners and had in the main been covered by private insurance. In other words, this was not a case of seeking compensation to be paid over to private claimants; it was a question of the national honor. Great Britain should render "satisfaction" for the injury she had wrought the United States. The escape of the "Alabama" had been notorious, it put the British government in a very weak position on a point of international law; but what counted was, not the property damage inflicted by a few raiders, but the psychosis developed in the North which blamed the British for the long delay before victory was won. There had to be some historical justification for the continued Northern defeats and the costliness of the Northern triumph, and the British were easy scapegoats. In the popular mind was a confused image of British wrongs, dating from the proclamation of May 1861 by which Her Majesty's Government had announced its neutrality in the struggle already begun. The escape of the "Alabama" merely served to prove the point, the misdeeds of England were to blame for *at least* doubling the length of the war!

It was the rugged Senator from Massachusetts who, no doubt in all sincerity, seized the opportunity for demagoguery. The occasion was the debate in the Senate over the Johnson-Clarendon convention, which Sumner gathered all his energy to defeat. Though this treaty, like most others, was being debated in secret session, Sumner's speech was printed for public consumption and broadcast everywhere throughout the nation. The speech was the rallying point for public opinion. Sumner rationalized what he described as the "massive grievance" of the American people against Great Britain, and built up a logical argument to "prove" that Britain had deliberately tried to foster a Southern victory. Everything she had done from the neutrality proclamation to the close of the war pointed that way. The conflict had been a four-billion-dollar war, Sumner asserted; two and a half billions were still outstanding on the national debt; it was only right that the British should assume this unpaid obligation.

The Senator was as persuasive as the Pied Piper; a master of plausible argument, he caught the popular imagination just when the

hour was ripe. 'Midst the excitement spurred by so definite a formulation of a great grievance, few were alert to the basic fallacies in his reasoning or to the twists which he gave to the principles of international law. But Sumner was not thinking of a money payment. He was hoping for the cession of Canada. The wish was father to the thought. The British could repair the wrong "painlessly" by delivering their North American possessions into American hands. Many of Sumner's English friends—"Little Englanders" they were called at home—had many times expressed their distaste for the colonies; it was an open question in England whether or not colonies were worth while, and the "Little Englanders" seemed to have the best of the argument; the bridge between the British readiness to drop the colonies and their duty to make good the injustice to America was thus complete.

Legal issues raised by the American accusations have received their due in a previous chapter of this volume.⁴ The burning desire for national redress was genuine enough, but those whom it mastered got it confused with their equally genuine desire for Canada. The connection between the two was at first only one of implication. But warlike men like Senator Chandler of Michigan hastened to brush aside the doubt immediately. "If Great Britain," said Chandler, "should meet us in a friendly spirit, acknowledge her wrong and cede all her interests in the Canadas in settlement of these claims, we will have perpetual peace with her, but if she does not *we must conquer peace*. We cannot afford to have an enemy's base so near us. It is a national necessity that we should have the British possessions"⁵ Chandler put the emphasis on getting Canada, whereas Sumner had put it on the "massive grievance" against England. It would be next to impossible, of course, to say which feeling was the more prevalent. Even Fish shared the common opinion with respect to the future of Canada, but he opposed blustering or forceful methods and rejected the fallacies which underlay Sumner's position. He could not but agree with the view expressed by Sir Edward Thornton, the British minister at Washington, that if the Canadians voluntarily declared in favor of exchanging admission to the American Union for their British allegiance, Great Britain would not stand in their way. It was the Secretary's task to keep the two issues separate, though he was not averse himself to applying an indirect form of pressure against the Canadians, as we shall see.

⁴ See pp. 109-12. Consult also chapter 53 below, pp. 748-52.

⁵ Quoted by J. F. Rhodes, *History of the United States* (New York, 1920) VI, 453-54. Italics are mine.

The picture got more blurred as a result of the border raids of the Irish Fenians. Sworn to win independence for Ireland, this Irish-American society discovered the easiest way to make mischief was to harass the farms and villages of Canada. Gathering in large numbers at Buffalo in 1866, the Fenians made sudden forays across the river, only to be pushed back into the waiting arms of American troops and dispersed. Tension ruled the border, however, for at least the next five years. In 1870 the Fenians tried it again. By this time annexationism had gained such a hold over Sumner's mind that he used the Fenians to justify his demands. The presence of the British flag in Canada excited the Irish, he solemnly told Fish. Therefore its withdrawal must be retained as a primary condition to a settlement with Britain over the claims issue. "To make the settlement complete," he added, "the withdrawal should be *from this hemisphere, including provinces and islands*"⁶ This was certainly a larger order than Sumner had drawn originally. Since he had already set his face against the projects of Seward and Grant to gain footholds in the Caribbean, one wonders about this apparent allusion to the British West Indies. At any rate Sumner's influence was by this time practically ended. Having fallen out with Grant over the latter's pet ambition to acquire a position in Santo Domingo,⁷ he presently found himself the victim of the presidential influence in the Senate. He was deposed from his post as chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations.

This was the last time that an effort was made to tie the Canadian annexation question to the indirect claims issue, though the latter was yet to be heard from again in a form as vicious as that in which Sumner had originally clothed it. But there never was a possibility, short of war, of forging the claims issue into a weapon to break the chain between Canada and the mother country. That question had to stand on its own merits, the fruit had to be ripe. Secretary Fish saw this from the outset and was one of the few national leaders who guided himself accordingly. The attempt to lump the two issues was never allowed to become a part of the administration's foreign policy. The implication was so clear, the subject was of such common notoriety, and the insistence of the annexationists so emphatic that Fish could not, of course, wholly ignore the problem. But though he referred to it freely in his private conversations with the British minister, and though the question remained always in the back-

⁶ Moore, *International Arbitrations*, I, 525-26. Italics are mine.

⁷ See chapter 39 below, pp. 611-15.

ground, shadowing every attempt to liquidate the claims difficulty, Fish persevered in his efforts to get the latter question settled on its merits. Success crowned his work with the award of the Geneva arbitration tribunal in 1872.

What were the signs at this time to justify the widely held belief that the Canadians were only awaiting a chance to be annexed? First, the political geography of that portion of the continent favored the American view. Until 1870 almost the only contacts possessed by the two Western colonies of British Columbia and Manitoba were with the United States. If Alaska was a land of hidden wealth, British Columbia had already proved its riches when the deposits of the Fraser River were uncovered in 1858. Much of the supplies and the human stuff that contributed to the colony came from California; Vancouver Island had united with the mainland in 1866, but the combined communities were too weak to stand alone indefinitely. Henceforth the leading issue of the colony was whether to join the American Union or federate with the newly formed Dominion of Canada. The annexationist party put itself in touch with the American government, Seward must have been cheered by the receipt of their petition in 1866. Nevertheless, the fruit remained on the tree. The majority of British Columbians demanded federation with Canada, and got it in 1871.

The small British colony on the Red River near Lake Winnipeg, founded early in the century on Hudson's Bay Company lands, was fully as isolated as the colony on the Pacific Coast. When just before the Civil War the Minnesota Territory began to fill with settlers, Winnipeg commenced to feel a sympathetic growth. Immigrants from Minnesota swelled its small population; St. Paul superseded Churchill on Hudson Bay as its chief gateway, and until 1870, when Canadian militia pushed through from Lake Superior to establish an all-Canadian route to the West, there was no way of reaching Red River except by way of American territory. A French and half-breed insurrection in that year awoke the governor and legislature of Minnesota to their opportunities; they petitioned the administration at Washington to take advantage of the rebellion; and Secretary Fish so far surrendered to the temptation of the hour as to order the Canadians temporarily barred from using the Soo Canal. Denial of this vital link between Lakes Huron and Superior hampered the Canadian authorities in dispatching an expedition to put down the revolt. The Canadians nevertheless showed their mettle by using the lakes for the expedition and portaging both men and supplies around the canal. The successful suppression of the revolt led

to the federation of the Red River colony as Manitoba with the Dominion.

Between British Columbia and Manitoba and stretching far away to the north lay the great domain of the Hudson's Bay Company. Seward hoped to encourage American companies to buy out the Bay Company and pave the way for the Americanization of the great Northwest. The purchase of Alaska obviously was the first step in the execution of this great design. With British Columbia and Manitoba already joined by trade with the neighboring American states and showing favorable responses to the gestures of Manifest Destiny, Seward and his contemporaries were naturally sanguine about the result. Events in the Western provinces swung definitely the other way, however; the Canadians proved themselves equal to the occasion, and in 1870 the Dominion government itself bought out the Hudson's Bay Company. It was definitely settled that the northern half of the continent, except Alaska, was to remain British.

Meanwhile the Eastern colonies of British North America had made a decisive counterstroke against the possibility of annexation. Alarmed by the tension of the Civil War and the Fenian raids, and fearful lest these should prove the forerunners of invasion, Canada proper (Ontario and Quebec) adopted federal government in co-operation with the Maritime Provinces. The new Dominion of Canada began its existence on March 29, 1867, one day before the signing of the Alaska Treaty in Washington. There was uncertainty about its permanency, however; none of the Maritimes was at first an enthusiastic member, and Prince Edward Isle and Newfoundland remained out. Grasping the situation, Benjamin F. Butler of Massachusetts, one of the most outspoken of the Radical Republicans in Congress, betook himself to Prince Edward Isle to help keep that colony out of the Dominion. Needless to say, his efforts met with failure.

Patently it was this uncertainty about the Canadian future that kept high the hopes of the apostles of American Manifest Destiny. The period from 1866 to 1871 was a critical one. Canadian federation was heartily disliked by the radicals in Congress and was recognized as a move to thwart annexation to the United States; General Banks offered a resolution defining it as an unfriendly act. After the Dominion had been formed, its future seems to have been regarded with doubt. Just how clearly men like Sumner correlated in their minds the events to the north with the hue and cry they raised over the indirect claims against Great Britain is a matter of conjecture. Sumner seems to have been blind to certain things, but

in this he was representative of millions of Americans. He seems to have been utterly oblivious to the force with which the Canadians were binding their own empire together. Even Secretary Fish apparently valued the vitality of the new Dominion rather lightly. With few exceptions, which proved unimportant, the American program for annexation did not invoke the possibility of war. There was no organized war party in the United States similar to the War Hawks of 1812, bent on crossing swords with the British, with Canada as the prize.

Whatever genuine hope for annexation existed depended upon the breakdown of Canadian federation; the indirect claims issue was a red herring hatched from an unreasoning grudge. All but its most violent advocates shrank from the logical consequence, which was war. Only a choice by the Canadian people in favor of annexation could have fulfilled the prophecy of Manifest Destiny, Seward bought Alaska partly to influence their decision; and the course of events in 1867 seemed to point to a fairly easy American penetration of all of the Canadian West. Certainly there was little to indicate in that year that Canada could have a manifest destiny of her own. Because she determined to have it so, the continent remained permanently divided.

CARIBBEAN AND ISTHMIAN EXPANSION

BY ADDING FLORIDA in 1819 to its continental domain the United States filled in the gap left by the Louisiana Purchase along a highly strategic coastline. The annexation of Texas twenty-five years later extended this coastline to the Rio Grande, and put the country in a position to dominate the Gulf of Mexico. These moves, followed by the Mexican War, created the strong probability of a further thrust in the direction of Cuba and the Caribbean.

The second phase of American expansion in fact commenced almost immediately after the Mexican War, and was precipitated by the seeming urgency of securing control over a route across Central America to the Pacific Coast. Attempts to annex Cuba, paralleled by agitation to make a permanent ally out of Nicaragua, initiated the movement, and repeated expeditions by filibusters during the 1850's suggested that private adventurers might determine the pattern of conquest.

Numerous complicated forces set brakes to these ambitions, however: the refusal of Great Britain and Spain to allow an alteration in the status quo, the fierce domestic quarreling in the United States, culminating in the Civil War, the magnificent success of the trans-continental railroads in the period after that war. For the time being, the isthmian route no longer seemed so important. In addition, after the French withdrawal from Mexico in 1867, international politics in the Caribbean settled down to a period of comparative inactivity.

Sundry American administrations, however, continued to try for footholds in the Caribbean. Ignoring Cuba, Secretary Seward developed the outlines of a master plan which involved the purchase of the Virgin Islands and the leases of one or more additional West Indian harbors for naval purposes. Samaná Bay in the Dominican Republic and Môle St. Nicholas in Haiti were held to be the choicest sites. Also a treaty which Seward negotiated with Nicaragua in 1867 emphasized the American interest in transit rights across the Isthmus, but the Secretary was careful not to challenge the joint

security system established under the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty with Great Britain.

Later occupants of Seward's chair, notably Blaine and Frelinghuysen, continued to grope for footholds among the islands and for opportunities to oust Great Britain. Frelinghuysen openly tried to flout the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty by signing an alliance with Nicaragua in 1884 capable of being used as leverage on the British interest in the Mosquito Reserve. This move never came to the test, however, because Grover Cleveland, an Executive with a finer sense of the moral obligations of the United States, killed the treaty. Meanwhile, sly efforts on the part of President Grant and later of Secretary Blaine to get harbor concessions in Santo Domingo had met with failure. It is to be noted, furthermore, that this interest in naval bases remained uncorrelated with naval construction in the United States until after 1885, the year when the American Navy entered on a building program.

On its part, public opinion in the United States was absorbed in many expansionist activities at home and remained stolidly indifferent to obtaining a strategic grip on the Caribbean. This apathy, however, was much less pronounced on the issue of a transisthmian canal, the construction, ownership, and exclusive control of which continued to appeal to the popular imagination. Humanitarianism and theories of racial superiority combined in 1898 to produce an emotional explosion over Cuba; and the change in the island's status, as a result of the war, from a Spanish to an American dependency was decisive. Effective penetration of the Caribbean and the establishment of an American hegemony followed very quickly.

The thrust into the Caribbean was inextricably entangled with the problems in Isthmian Security, previously presented in Part I. The case studies which illustrate the expansionist process are as follows: (1) Bids for Cuba, 1848-1860, (2) Intrigues for Santo Domingo, 1853-1870; (3) The Partition of the Spanish Empire, 1898-1900, (4) The Panama Revolution of 1903.

CHAPTER 38

BIDS FOR CUBA, 1848-1860

THE UNITED STATES in the second quarter of the nineteenth century began keeping a shepherd's watch over Cuba lest the island stray into the fold of France or England. The tensest moment was in the spring of 1848, when sundry alarmists succumbed to the illusion that England was about to sweep the island, the peninsula of Yucatan, and the coast of Central America into her embrace. President Polk proposed to meet the fancied emergency by offering fifty millions to Spain for Cuba, and was ready to double the ante if necessary. Getting the island by means of a higgling process, however, proved a barren prospect. The Spaniards behaved as though outraged by the mere suggestion of a sale, and rejected the offer so abruptly as to discourage repetition.

Polk and the Democrats, who could thus claim the honor of making the first actual, though futile, move to annex the island, were then defeated in the elections, and their successors, the Whigs, displayed no anxiety to find other means to gain the desired object. Four years later the Democrats returned to power, however, resolved to find a way of plucking what John Quincy Adams had once referred to as a ripening apple. Under their leadership the country was decidedly in an expansive mood. President Pierce said in his inaugural address

The policy of my administration will not be controlled by any timid forebodings of evil from expansion. Indeed, it is not to be disguised that our attitude as a nation and our position on the globe render the acquisition of certain possessions not within our jurisdiction eminently important for our protection, if not in the future essential for the preservation of the rights of commerce and the peace of the world.¹

It was generally recognized that this was a veiled announcement of a resolve to make a fresh bid for Cuba and, if possible, for the Hawaiian Islands. Then with American interests in the Central American transit made secure, the minimum requirements for a maritime empire reaching across the Pacific would have been completed. Southern annexationists, furthermore, anticipated the admission of Cuba into the Union as a state as a means of redressing the political balance against the North.

¹ Richards, pp. 2731-32.

Circumstances developing during the four years' interlude between Polk and Pierce greatly increased the expectancy of Cuba's falling from the Spanish tree. A Venezuelan adventurer, Narciso López, in company with a junta, or committee, of Cubans in New York bent on revolution, had been a source of disturbance for most of this time. López recruited armed bands of men, filibusters, in the United States in the hope of landing them in Cuba and inspiring an uprising on the island. He was successful in organizing small armies in New York and New Orleans, supported by funds raised especially in the South, where a revolt was regarded as merely an advance chapter to application for admission to the Union. The public men of Louisiana and Mississippi particularly Governor John A. Quitman of the latter state, were openly instrumental in winning popular support for the conspirators. López made two escapes from the port of New Orleans, once in May 1850 and again in August 1851; the first expedition effected a temporary landing in the western part of the island but was greeted with indifference from the local citizenry. It evacuated barely in time to avoid capture. The second attempt ended in disaster. The entire band of 450 men was captured by the Spaniards, López and over fifty of his followers were garroted, and the remainder were thrown into prison.

Popular sentiment in the United States had endorsed the Cuban filibusters on a wide scale; there had been little secrecy connected with the preparations for the expeditions, and when the federal government attempted to indict López for conspiracy against the neutrality laws on his escape to Florida after his first failure it found only juries sympathetic to the lawbreakers. It had checkmated an attempt at escape from New York in 1849; but, despite the posting of a government vessel at New Orleans to watch López, his bands got away both times under cover of darkness.

It was now distinctly the turn of the United States to be the object of suspicion. The British and French became convinced that it was up to them to maintain the status quo; they were willing to credit the American government under the Whigs with honesty of purpose, but after noting its failures to suppress the conspiracy they lacked confidence in its ability. The very observing British minister in Washington, Sir Henry Bulwer, reached the conclusion in August 1851 that, even though López would probably fail in his immediate plans, the chances for an upheaval in the island were increasing. A rebellion in Cuba was certain to be supported by volunteers flocking in large numbers from the United States, and in Bulwer's judgment the most effective way to prevent it was for Britain and France

openly to stand behind Spain. The British minister's estimate of the situation in the United States is worth repeating. He wrote confidentially to his chief, Lord Palmerston

The United States Government is honourable, just, and prudent; it is not likely to originate wars of solely an ambitious and aggressive character, but the people who live under this Government are of the wild, adventurous, and conquering character, which distinguished in distant times the warlike, piratical, and conquering races of the North of Europe

The hold which their Government has over them is exceedingly weak and uncertain: and it has been their habit to pour into, and occupy territory contiguous to their own, and then, assuming the character and position of its natural inhabitants, to claim its annexation to the Mother State.

I do not allude to these circumstances in any spirit hostile to the people whom I thus describe. On the contrary, some of the traits I have noticed have always constitutionally marked the early history of a powerful race; and have been conspicuous in the history of our own:—but I speak of facts which exist, which are important, and which require attention.²

Upon Bulwer's recommendation it was decided in London to instruct the British West Indian squadron to intercept any suspicious vessels it encountered en route to Cuba and to turn over to an American man-of-war any manned by Americans. This was the most drastic step Great Britain ever took in the whole course of her endeavor to keep the status quo in the island. Informed of the decision, the administration in Washington protested such measures, fortunately, the fate of López in September proved an effective warning against further filibustering and no actual visitations by British warships occurred in the Gulf. The British regarded Cuba as they regarded Turkey under the Sultan: a land despotically misgoverned, which, nevertheless, would be most contented under Spanish rule once the Spaniards could be induced to make an honest effort to reform their administration and subdue the African slave trade. Like the "Sick Man" in Europe, however, the Spaniards shrewdly capitalized the island's strategic position to assure them British diplomatic support against the United States; they never gave anything but empty promises to carry out reforms.

Spain had repeatedly pleaded with the British government to enter into a written alliance with France for guaranteeing her possession of Cuba. Britain fought shy of this until she learned from

² This extract is from an unprinted dispatch from Bulwer to Palmerston, August 12, '51, "F O, America," Vol. 529, Public Record Office, London

her ambassador in Paris that the ambitious French President, Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, was likely to gain an ascendancy over her in the councils at Madrid unless some step were taken. It was then decided to get France to join in a proposal to the United States government to enter a three-power pact for the preservation of Spanish authority. The French replied that they preferred a dual partnership with England to an agreement with the United States, but the British government absolutely refused unless the United States was made a party. It was thought that even should the United States reject the proposal it would have value, it would be an open declaration of the British and French position, and would disarm the United States of a pretext for aggression against Cuba on the ground that Britain and France were plotting to obtain control.

The British and French reached an advance agreement on the terms of the proposed convention and presented it to the Whig administration in Washington in April 1852. It provided that

The high contracting parties hereby severally and collectively disclaim, both now and for hereafter, all intention to obtain possession of the island of Cuba, and they respectively bind themselves to discountenance all attempt to that effect on the part of any power *or individuals* whatever.

The high contracting parties, declare, severally and collectively, that they will not obtain or maintain for themselves, or for any one of themselves, any exclusive control over the said island, nor assume nor exercise any dominion over the same.⁸

The British and French ministers in Washington used all the persuasion they could bring to bear upon President Fillmore personally to get an acceptance of the proposed pact. At one point the President seemed won over, provided the British and French would consent to extend the terms of the convention to the Hawaiian Islands. This they readily agreed to do; but Fillmore, being a candidate to succeed himself at that time, wished to defer action on the pact until after November. Apparently the influential, though dying Secretary of State, Daniel Webster, remained ignorant of this interview, and it may be doubted whether, even had the Whigs won the elections, the pact would have got as far as the Senate. However, the Democrats won and the Whig Secretary of State, Edward Everett, whom Fillmore had appointed to succeed Webster, seized the opportunity to compose a lengthy state paper in which

⁸ Great Britain, *Parliamentary Papers, 1852-53*, Commons, CII, "Correspondence concerning Cuba," 13. I have italicized the phrase "or individuals" because private adventurers from the United States obviously were the chief menace to the status quo.

he reviewed the history of the expansion of the United States and explained why the country could not impose a permanent disability upon itself from "making an acquisition which might take place in the natural order of things." This was returning to the language of John Quincy Adams, with a little different terminology. "Territorially and commercially," Mr. Everett wrote, "Cuba would, in our hands, be an extremely valuable possession." Then, with a delicate reference to the serious domestic complications that annexation would probably induce between the slave states and the free states, he promised that Cuba's acquisition "by force, except in a just war with Spain," would be regarded "as a disgrace to the civilization of the age."

It is easy to see why the Whig administration opposed annexation. It feared to disturb the balance of power within the United States set up by the Compromise of 1850. Mr. Everett's paper was made public in the United States shortly after it was handed to the British and French ministers. So wordy a justification for rejecting a simple proposition to neutralize Cuba by international agreement seems unnecessary. The chances are that Mr. Everett wrote for the benefit of the American public and especially of the Whig party, which dreamed of a return to office four years later.⁴

Fillmore's successor, as we have noted, entered office confident that he could add laurels to the Democratic party by taking over the island. Revolution and independence were the expected instruments; but when it came to formulating definite plans the Pierce administration found itself as much in the dark as any of its predecessors. No successor to López appeared, and Cuba was now free from revolutionary activity. The administration had an opportunity to promote a "just war" on Spain in March 1854. An American ship, the "Black Warrior," had been retained in Havana harbor the preceding month for a technical violation of the port regulations and its cargo had been seized. The American minister in Madrid, Pierre Soulé, a naturalized American of French extraction who had been appointed to the post because of his fierce advocacy of Cuban annexation, wanted to capitalize the "Black Warrior" incident. Exceeding his instructions, he sent an ultimatum to the Spanish foreign minister, Calderón de la Barca, demanding an apology and promise of indemnity within forty-eight hours. Calderón had not even received a report on the incident from the authorities in Havana at the time Soulé delivered his ultimatum. He had had experience

⁴ Everett's state paper is printed in 32d Cong., 2d sess., *Senate Executive Document 13*, pp. 15-23.

in Washington, however, as a former Spanish envoy to this country, and he correctly guessed that Soulé was bluffing. The foolish minister was ignored, and the incident was easily liquidated through the Spanish legation in Washington. The administration itself was wholly free of any malicious intention to make use of the affair. It could not afford to have any—it was already being viciously attacked within the United States for repudiating the Compromise of 1850 by its support of the Kansas-Nebraska bill.

Nevertheless, President Pierce and his Secretary of State, William L. Marcy, were not above encouraging the hot-tempered Soulé to search for means of getting Cuba. In April 1854 they authorized him to reopen the bid for purchasing the island and to go as high as \$130,000,000 if necessary. If Spain spurned the offer, his instructions read,

you will then direct your efforts to the next most desirable object which is to detach that island from the Spanish dominion and from all dependence on any European power.

If Cuba were relieved from all transatlantic connection and at liberty to dispose of herself as her present interest and prospective welfare would dictate, she would undoubtedly relieve this government from all anxiety in regard to her future condition.⁶

This was cryptic language. What it seemed to say was that, if Spain would not sell, Soulé was to investigate the possibility of a revolution in the island. Considering Soulé's past—he had been expelled from France for revolutionary activity—and his known greed for Cuba, it would seem that such an invitation needed only to be made in order to give free rein to his talents for plotting. But Soulé found himself deadlocked: his own government vetoed extreme measures over the "Black Warrior," and the situation in Spain discouraged the prospect of negotiation or intrigue. Meanwhile President Pierce played with the idea of appointing two distinguished American citizens to act with Soulé, in the hope, no doubt, of making an impression on the recalcitrant Spaniards. Unlike the case of Louisiana in 1803 or that of Florida in 1819, however, Cuba furnished no real ray of hope for the cause of American annexation.

The Pierce administration made one last effort in August 1854. Britain and France being locked in war with Russia, it was thought Spain could be caught without the sustaining help of their diplomacy. Soulé and the two ministers stationed in London and Paris, Buchanan and John Y. Mason, were told to meet together and if pos-

⁶ Quoted in Bemis, *American Secretaries of State*, VI, 193.

sible recommend a line of policy for the administration to follow. Buchanan, formerly Secretary of State under Polk, had previously mentioned an ingenious scheme he had considered of winning the favor of British holders of Spanish bonds in the hope they would exert their influence with their government on the side of annexation. The Baring brothers and the Rothschilds he thought would be particularly valuable allies. The former had large holdings of American securities and were interested in the suppression of the slave trade. Just how intimate Buchanan became with them while in London and whether or not he won them to his point of view is unknown, so far as the British government was concerned its position remained unaltered. Marcy and Pierce were probably correct, however, in their assumption that Great Britain would not now be more than a passive obstacle to annexation. When the British Foreign Office learned that the Spanish government was getting ready to expel Soulé on the ground that he had plotted revolution while in Madrid, it threw its influence against the proposed action; the Spaniards were warned against expecting British support if they quarreled with the United States.

Soulé, Buchanan, and Mason met in Ostend, Belgium, in October 1854, but to escape unwanted publicity they retreated across the German border to the small town of Aix-la-Chapelle. How they occupied the week, what arguments and what exchanges of view took place remain unrecorded. Apparently they abandoned Buchanan's scheme as hopeless. Nothing more original than a few startling phrases emerged from the summary report which they jointly agreed to make to Marcy, however. As a confidential document, which it was intended to be, the report was innocuous; as a public "Manifesto," which the newspapers succeeded in making out of it, it achieved a sensational reputation. In this so-called Ostend Manifesto the three American diplomats (the term ought perhaps to be applied to them only advisedly) recommended the following first, "an immediate and earnest effort ought to be made" to purchase Cuba; second, after the offer shall have been refused, the question should be considered whether the island

in the possession of Spain seriously endangers[s] our internal peace and the existence of our cherished Union. Should this question be answered in the affirmative, then, by every law human and Divine, we shall be justified in wresting it from Spain, if we possess the power; and this upon the very same principle that would justify an individual in tearing down the burning house of his neighbor, if there were no other means of preventing the flames from destroying his own home. Under such circum-

stances, we ought neither to count the cost, nor regard the odds which Spain might enlist against us⁶

The three Americans agreed on the dangers of the supposed "Africanization" scheme which the British were suspected of promoting. Africanization of Cuba would undermine the social foundations of the South and hence be a just cause of war. Usually there is fire where there is smoke, but this case appears to violate the rule. It was common gossip among Americans who held responsible positions, but the origins of the story and the evidence to prove it remain a minus quantity.⁷ When the rumor was reported to the British Foreign Office, it ordered that it be emphatically disavowed; more convincing still is the moderation and need for reform that Great Britain consistently tried to impress on Spain, if the latter hoped to keep Cuba. These were the sole British antidotes against annexation.

The Ostend Manifesto suggested no practicable means for the United States to get Cuba. Its authors said nothing that had not been discussed or tried before. Despite its menacing ring, their "Manifesto" lacked conviction and left the issue suspended just where it had been. Cuba was no menace to American security; its seizure could therefore not be justified on the ground advocated by the Manifesto. Southerners seeking the island as a safeguard against the North, "Young America," and other groups who kept the polestar of manifest destiny lighted, looked upon Cuba as the next logical bite for the United States to take. But few were ready to apply the "robber doctrine," as Marcy himself described it, and the grave problem of admitting another slave state to the Union did not have to be solved.

⁶ Quoted in Bemis, *op cit*, pp 194-95.

⁷ This statement is based on my own search of the British archives for the period 1848-1860.

CHAPTER 39

INTRIGUES FOR SANTO DOMINGO,
1853-1870

SANTO DOMINGO, the second largest island of the West Indies, is unequally divided into two parts. The western part is Haiti, smaller in area but denser in population, which, despite the immigration of some 40,000 French colonists at the close of the eighteenth century, is almost wholly black. Twice Haiti's size, but containing a scant 150,000 people, of varying hues of color from the jet-black negro slaves to the Spanish-speaking ruling caste which passed as white, the Dominican Republic occupied the eastern portion. A successful revolt against Haiti in 1844 made it nominally independent; but its despotic presidents, Pedro Santana and Buenaventura Baez, who alternated each other in power, maintained an uncertain position against their menacing neighbor, the black emperor, Soulouque. Santana and Baez agreed on one point: that they must have the protection of an outside power against their neighbor. The choice seemed to lie between France and Spain, but after 1849 the United States assumed an important place. At this time also a fourth power, Great Britain, became an interested party.

For a brief period three of the powers—Britain, France, and the United States—gave at least the appearance of unity in behalf of Dominican independence. Soulouque had been repelled by the Dominicans in an attempted invasion in 1849, and the three powers jointly urged him to refrain from future attempts and at least to agree to a ten years' truce. But when the black emperor cannily refused, proposals for joint military intervention by the powers fell by the wayside. The Whig government in the United States favored steps in this direction, but the British and French would not exceed the limits of diplomatic representation. The Dominican Republic continued to be independent, though living more or less under a cloud. Britain and France had recognized it in 1849; but the United States, influenced by the racial factor, had not. Indeed it would appear that the notice taken of the republic by the European powers forced the hand of the American government in the first instance.

Although the Dominicans were a wretchedly poor folk, their land itself offered opportunities. There had once been surface mining for precious metals. Forests of mahogany, ebony, and logwood invited development. Cotton, sugar, and coffee plantations were within

the range of possibility, while the Cibao, a long narrow valley in the north, was already given over to cattle. Finally, Samaná Bay, near the northeastern end of the island, was a promising harbor for shipping, not to mention its strategic value as a naval base.

These considerations aroused interest in the United States. Benjamin Green, the agent sent by Clayton in 1850, schemed to plant colonists in the Cibao and emulate the example of Austin in Texas. But the adventurer who identified his name with the country was a William L. Cazneau, a New Englander of French Catholic extraction who had had experience in Texas. Cazneau's first contact with Santo Domingo was as agent sent by the Pierce administration in 1854 to conclude a treaty and lease of Samaná Bay. The Democrats altered the policy of the United States toward Santo Domingo, as they did toward other places in the Caribbean. They advocated territorial aggrandizement, and Cazneau interested them in Samaná Bay as a naval station. Probably the Pierce administration looked upon Samaná as a steppingstone to Cuba, its chief goal in the Caribbean, and it made the grant of a lease the condition for recognizing Dominican independence. British and French interests in the Caribbean took alarm and vainly sought the support of their home governments. A Kingston, Jamaica, newspaper stated their attitude in terms of security against American aggression. If the Americans occupy Samaná, it wrote,

they will most surely concentrate an immense body of troops there and eventually descend upon Cuba, and if America holds Cuba and Santo Domingo, in the event of war with England, of what use would be Jamaica to the Parent Country?

The Pierce administration had no success with its proposed convention. Santana, who was then president, thought his chances for protection against Souloque better with the British and French, and hence listened to Sir Robert Schomburgk and M. Raybaud more than to Cazneau. The latter finally got his treaty, but included in it was a provision inserted at the suggestion of his rivals giving Dominicans the same rights in the United States that American citizens were to have in the republic. This offended Southern sensibilities and made ratification out of the question. On the other hand, both Britain and France refused to support the Dominican Republic by force of arms, and Santana henceforth leaned more and more upon Spain. The latter was finally beguiled into accepting a protectorate over the republic in 1860, only to encounter rebellion and to retire in dismay four years later.

The one person who was not daunted by the ebb and flow of international politics was Cazneau. He and Joseph Fabens, another Yankee adventurer who joined him in 1859, showed a genius for whetting the appetite of private speculators and eventually re-arousing the interest of the American government. In 1862 they organized the American West India Company with an actual investment of four thousand dollars in Dominican lands which they capitalized at two million. Using this as a starting point they then organized several other wildcat ventures and sold stock in the United States. By 1868 they had control of concessions and property in the republic which would net them a vast fortune, could Santo Domingo be annexed or converted into a protectorate. Baez, who returned to power after the Spanish withdrawal, gave Fabens an option on any one-fifth of the national land the latter wished to select in return for a survey of all the public domain. To take advantage of this Fabens promoted in New York a new company which included such well-known men as Ben Holliday, the organizer of the famous Pony Express, and Cyrus McCormick. Moreover, Spofford, Tileston and Company, one of the most prominent New York financial houses, obtained a concession for a steamship line to Samaná Bay and a grant of a thirty-acre tract fronting on the bay. Fabens shared in this and other privileges, and the chain of Dominican concessions extended into Congress and over to London. By 1869 a large part of the republic was successfully mortgaged to foreign speculators, who had the greatest interest in bringing about annexation to the United States.

The issue revived in this country in 1866, when William H. Seward, the Secretary of State, went on a voyage among the Caribbean islands. Seward was not consciously influenced by speculators, his experience during the Civil War made him interested in securing at least one West Indian naval base as an instrument for making the Monroe Doctrine effective. Seward was shepherded around the island by Cazneau, and he returned home persuaded that Samaná Bay was the most advantageous site for a naval base. Unfortunately, when he sent his son Frederick to negotiate a cession, the Dominicans refused the offer. Baez was temporarily out, and Cabral, a third politician, who was more opposed to foreign interests, was in.

The crucial stage developed under President Grant. By this time Baez had been won over to the idea of a lease, provided the American government would furnish him with money and guns. How perilous was his position can be gathered from the terms of the loan he contracted in 1869 from Edward Hartmont of London, alias Hertzberg,

an escaped convict from France. The face value of the loan was £757,700, later reduced to £420,000; but Hartmont deducted £100,000 as his commission. The loan was secured by a mortgage on certain properties and revenues of the republic. Fabens, Spofford and Tileston were Hartmont's American agents.

Grant's interest in Samaná Bay was like Seward's, but he was particularly influenced by the interest which his friends, like Holliday and Ben Butler, took in the enterprise. Butler was in Congress and shared in the claim to a part of the waterfront at Samaná. The President sent his youthful and self-important private secretary, General Orville E. Babcock, to negotiate privately with Baez. Babcock sailed on a Spofford and Tileston boat, and "by accident" Fabens was a fellow passenger. Cazneau met them at Samaná and carefully "protected" Babcock against possible opposing influences in his dealings with Baez. The upshot was an agreement whereby the United States might either purchase Samaná for two million dollars or annex the republic upon assuming \$1,500,000 of its public debt; Grant was to remit one hundred thousand dollars in cash and fifty thousand in weapons and "privately to use all his influence" with Congress in getting the treaty approved.

Babcock was sent back to Santo Domingo in November 1869 with power to conclude two treaties: one for a fifty-year lease of the bay and peninsula of Samaná in consideration of an annual rental of \$150,000, the other for a simple annexation of the republic in return for a flat payment of \$1,500,000. Both treaties were signed, and \$150,000 was paid to Baez out of the secret-service fund of the American government. Furthermore, Grant personally undertook to protect Santo Domingo with naval forces against possible attack from Haiti. Thus Fabens and Cazneau, who had meticulously guided the whole transaction to a conclusion, with the support of speculative interests in Washington and New York, were on the threshold of a brilliant triumph.

The Dominican project became a favorite with Grant, and he brought all his influence to bear in getting it approved by the Senate. In spite of the fact that its trail leads back to private adventurers whose sole interest was material gain, there were larger implications in the question. The scheme fitted in with the historic national interest in territorial acquisitions. The assumption of Seward, Grant, and others that the Dominican Republic would be valuable in connection with establishing American supremacy in the Caribbean was unquestionably sound. On the other hand, there was no *existing* European threat to the American position. The French had peace-

fully withdrawn from Mexico four years previously without the need of the United States menacing them. Naval fulcra in the Caribbean hardly seemed necessary.

When finally brought to a vote in the Senate in June 1870, the treaty drew a tie. A shift of ten votes would have effected the necessary two-thirds majority in its favor. Grant for reasons of personal prestige and Fabens for reasons of personal gain labored for the treaty to the end. Fabens even got a rumor in circulation that Germany had designs on Samaná Bay, and Grant dignified the rumor by trying to use it as leverage upon the Senate. But except for the private parties interested, who were few in number and located mostly in New York, and a handful of others who regarded the issue from the standpoint of personal or national prestige, the Dominican project aroused little general popularity. It died a natural death, only to be revived in different circumstances thirty-five years later.¹

CHAPTER 40

THE PARTITION OF THE SPANISH EMPIRE, 1898-1900

MORE THAN HALF of the present United States, as Henry Adams remarked, originated as spoil at the expense of Spain. In 1898 that unfortunate kingdom still clung to an island empire. If that empire could be transferred to the American flag, the transaction would spell success for two long-range American policies: the Caribbean Sea would be mastered, and the United States would be sure of at least an equal share in the trade and political control of the islands of the Pacific and the lands of Eastern Asia. Control of Cuba would assure the first object; capture of the Marianas and the Philippines, coupled with an annexation treaty with the government of the Hawaiian Republic, would bring the second.

The general situation was as follows: The balance of power in the Caribbean in 1898 was still favorable to Great Britain, though the United States had been attempting to tip the scales since the middle of the century. Sundry bids for the purchase of Cuba and the

¹ See chapter 14, pp 167-71.

Danish West Indies and for the lease of harbors in the Dominican Republic and Samaná had all resulted in failure. Essentially the position of the United States had not been bettered since the important treaty concessions it had won from Great Britain in 1850. The Clayton-Bulwer Treaty of that year in the strict sense applied only to Central America; it set up a system of joint Anglo-American security with reference to the isthmian passageways. It did not, however, affect the island approaches to the Isthmus. Jamaica in British hands continued to command the inner Caribbean; Cuba, Santo Domingo, and Puerto Rico in Spanish or native hands remained an effective screen, and so long as the United States was without bases of its own, the real disadvantage to which it was subject could hardly be redressed.

William H. Seward appraised the situation at its true value in 1865 and sought to correct it by a purchase of the Danish West Indies, and Grant groped toward the same end in 1870 in a deal with the Dominicans for the control of Samaná Bay, but the people refused their lead. Prior to the Civil War the British had done what they could to keep the balance in their favor; they had actively supported the Spanish regime in Cuba and had intrigued to head off the conspiracy of the Pierce administration to get control of Samaná Bay. After the war their attitude was somewhat different. To be sure, they refused deliberately to alter the balance in favor of the United States, when this country under Blaine pleaded for the right to control an isthmian canal without foreign interference, the British stood firm on the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty. Nevertheless, it is significant that they took no measures to frustrate the attempts of Seward, Grant, and Blaine to obtain naval bases. The failure to follow up the prestige of victory in the Civil War by securing a foothold at the entrances to the Caribbean was due to indifference and opposition within the United States itself, not to British or other interference from abroad.

We should also note the association between mastery of the Caribbean and the consummation of another historic American policy, the championship of all the Americas. Secretary Olney gruffly asserted the latter in 1895 against Great Britain over the trivial issue of the disputed Venezuela boundary. British prestige was shaken in this instance, though from the standpoint of the technical distribution of naval power in the Western Hemisphere the ratio was much in Britain's favor. British statesmen grasped the truth that they had an opportunity to retreat with dignity; recognizing that the United States was on the threshold of arriving at its full estate in the West-

ern Hemisphere, they for the first time in their history bowed to the Monroe Doctrine and did it in such a way as to suffer a minimum loss of prestige. Less than three years later Spain was roughly brushed aside in a short, disastrous war over the issue of Cuban independence. The balance in the Caribbean was thereby permanently tipped in favor of the United States. This of course does not imply that the United States could, or would, have treated Britain, the predominant world power of the age, in the same summary fashion that it employed toward Spain. It is rather a testimony to the astuteness of British statesmanship, so expert at shadow-boxing. The British knew how to sidestep a quarrel; the Spaniards did not.

In the Pacific Ocean the outlook for the United States was less certain. In the possession of Alaska and the mortgage it held over the prime harbors of Samoa and Hawaii, the United States was secure enough so far as the eastern Pacific was concerned. Not so the western portion, and particularly the treaty rights exercised in China and Japan. American private enterprise, backed by an effective diplomacy, had earlier kept pace with the European nations in Eastern Asia. Chinese and Japanese treaty ports were open to Americans on the same terms as to other nations. The Open Door as thus defined, however, rested on the political integrity of the Chinese Empire, and in the final decade of the century the latter was not far from collapse. The Germans set a new example in China in 1897 when they seized the port of Kiao-Chow and virtually appropriated Shantung province for themselves. Russia and France followed suit with other parts of China, and England exhibited similar tendencies. The Celestial Empire was about to be split into exclusive spheres of influence, where the essential condition of the treaty rights, competitive trade, would almost certainly disappear. Since the American position in the Orient rested upon the treaties, and the treaties alone, the new European policy in China threatened to eliminate it unless strong counter-measures were taken.

West of Hawaii the Spanish islands were so disposed that they formed a natural corridor in the direction of the China coast. In the hands of the United States these islands, or a portion of them, could be employed effectively to safeguard American interests in China against the European closed door. Particularly was this true of the Philippines, whose harbor at Manila was well fitted as an entrepôt to the southeast coast of China.

This, then, was the general international outlook in the closing years of the century. The times were full of provocative incidents and controversial issues affecting foreign policy which forced them-

selves upon public attention. The question of an American-owned canal across Central America had been an issue since Hayes had agitated it in 1880; the Hawaiian Revolution of 1893 brought up squarely the question of annexation; while the controversy with Germany over Samoa in 1888 had sealed the resolve to stand firm on American rights in those distant islands. At the same time the Harrison administration kept the issue of Caribbean bases alive by putting pressure on Haiti for a concession at Môle St. Nicholas and by continuing negotiations with the Dominican dictator for lease of the harbor of Samaná Bay. Many there were who still clung to the forlorn hope that Canada would be ours. Harrison and Blaine hoped to club the Canadians into submission through the weapon of the tariff; Canada was made to feel isolated and helpless by an American refusal to treat for a commercial reciprocity agreement. Publicists like Henry Cabot Lodge were not loath to include the Dominion in the list of future annexations; and the Republican party platform of 1896 revived the spirit of Charles Sumner when it voiced a hope for "the eventual withdrawal of the European powers from this hemisphere, and the ultimate union of all English-speaking parts of the continent by the free consent of its inhabitants." Most provocative of all were the crises with Great Britain over Venezuela in 1895 and with Spain over the Cuban insurrection. The storm broke in 1898 over the issue of Cuban independence.

Concrete issues were accompanied by an undertone of sentiment rationalized by journalists, historians, and scientists in favor of action. The crude boasts characteristic of manifest destiny during the "roaring 'forties" were replaced by elevated arguments to prove the mastery of the Teutonic race and of its mission to civilize the weak and backward. "There is no human right to the status of barbarism," insisted Professor Burgess, one of the country's foremost political scientists. Theories of racial superiority and of biological selection of the fittest tallied with religious notions of the white man's burden and historical concepts of the power of the national state and of the destiny of America in particular. The United States should finish the colonizing mission begun by England. "Every land on the earth's surface that is not already the seat of an old civilization shall become English in its language, in its religion, in its political habits and traditions, and to a predominant extent in the blood of its people," predicted the popular New England historian, John Fiske; and the United States would be the instrument.

Some writers like the young Senator from Massachusetts, Henry Cabot Lodge, and Captain Alfred Thayer Mahan of the Naval War

College sought to give this general fermentation of ideas direction. Lodge recommended adding Canada, the Nicaraguan Canal, Hawaii, and Samoa. Toward Britain he adopted a menacing tone because of her dominating position in the West Indies. "We should have among those islands at least one strong naval station, and when the Nicaraguan canal is built, the island of Cuba . . . will become to us a necessity," he wrote in a widely circulated magazine, *The Forum*, in 1895.¹

Mahan, on the other hand, was a strong advocate of an Anglo-American reunion. A better prophet than Lodge and a far sounder thinker, the famous author of the theory of sea power foresaw the growing mutuality of interests between Britain and the United States. Depicting his country as an insular power facing both oceans, Mahan was a warm advocate of an Isthmian canal, a large Navy, and the necessary island bases in the Caribbean and the Pacific to support it. A penetrating student of American history, Mahan brushed aside the smug "holier-than-thou" attitude that assumed America to be a moral saint among the nations and described American expansion in realistic terms. Writing of previous acquisitions of territory on the continent, which had been aimed at ridding the country of unwelcome contacts with foreign powers, he said:

We consequently entered upon a course of action precisely such as a European continental state would have followed under like circumstances. In order to get possession of the territory in which our interests were involved, we bargained and manoeuvred and threatened; and although Jefferson's methods were peaceful enough, few will be inclined to claim that they were marked by excess of scrupulousness, or even of adherence to his own political convictions. . . .²

Nor did Mahan allow himself to be deceived by any miraculous qualities to be found in the Monroe Doctrine to bring security to the Western Hemisphere against European aggression. He wrote:

Reduced to its barest statement, and stripped of all deductions, natural or forced, the Monroe doctrine, if it were not a mere political abstraction, formulated an idea to which in the last resort effect could be given only through the instrumentality of a navy, for the gist of it, the kernel of the truth, was that the country had at that time [1823] distant inter-

¹ These quotations are taken from Julius W. Pratt, *The Expansionists of 1898* (Baltimore, 1936), pp. 4-5, 9, and 214, and from the same author's "The 'Large Policy' of 1898," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XIX (1932-33), 219-42.

² *The Interest of America in Sea Power, Present and Future* (Boston, 1898), p. 143.

ests of a high order in the destiny of foreign territory, of which a distinguishing characteristic was that they could be assured only by sea.³

But Mahan was less interested in South America than he was in Asia, and he looked upon the Caribbean as a corridor linked with the Isthmian canal and the Pacific to insure the future of the United States, more than as a means of protecting South America. After reciting the various possibilities for naval sites in the Caribbean, his choice fell upon Cuba; he was as chagrined as Lodge at Cleveland's repudiation of the chance to annex Hawaii in 1893, and though he does not seem to have extended his vision to the Philippines, he became a warm advocate of their retention in 1898.

The man who came closest to anticipating the value of the latter to the United States was Theodore Roosevelt. As Assistant Secretary of the Navy under McKinley in 1897, Roosevelt had chosen Captain George Dewey for the command of the American Asiatic squadron. The Assistant Secretary was strongly in favor of war with Spain, in April 1898, when the crisis with that country was pending, he got orders to Dewey to keep steam up at Hong Kong, where the American squadron was stationed, and sail for Manila the moment he received word of the outbreak of hostilities. Roosevelt cannot be charged directly with plotting war with Spain in order to have an excuse for robbing her of her colonies, nevertheless, he was impulsively in favor of war, and once the Spanish empire had fallen he was openly in favor of keeping the Philippines. Like Mahan, Roosevelt was a strong believer in American expansion in the Far East.

So much for the general atmosphere which prevailed in the United States on the eve of the outbreak of war. The decade of the 1890's has been compared to the "roaring 'forties" in the unrestrained spirit of aggression which preceded the onslaught on Mexico in 1846. But there is this notable difference: the *government* of the United States had definite, stated war aims in 1846. Polk was consciously determined to have certain territories from Mexico when he went to war with her. Fifty years later the case was different. There was general agreement throughout the country on the need for strengthening the American position: even Bryan Democrats concurred in a program for the control of an isthmian canal. There were a few clear-headed persons like Mahan who thought in terms of Cuba and Hawaii as indispensable to the security of such a canal. Whether even Mahan included the Philippines in his original blueprints may be doubted. But the point is

³ *The Interest of America in Sea Power, Present and Future*, pp. 150-52.

that none of the men cited was in position to direct the policies of the government, and at no time did the administration itself supply the leadership. Young Roosevelt held McKinley in the greatest disdain. the President "had no more backbone than a chocolate éclair," he said. A foolish and impetuous characterization, undoubtedly; but nevertheless McKinley was unable to think of the war in terms broader than the immediate issue of Cuban independence. In 1898, as in 1846, there was a fierce popular drive for war, but it was a rather aimless and poorly directed drive.

The outcome in 1898 was the correct one, judged by standards of national power, but the advance blueprints were faulty. In fact there were none. In three years the nation was swept up in a flood of feeling for the woes of Cuba; the vials of wrath were poured out upon Spain. The Spanish government, as we shall see, made last-ditch concessions that practically met all of the demands upon it from the United States. Nevertheless these were not enough—nothing would satisfy the American public but war itself. In going into the war neither the administration nor the public was articulate on the subject of what was to be gained. On the other hand, the men who were most influential when the time came to make peace were men who were in thorough and frank accord with the plans for a greater United States as outlined by Mahan and Lodge.

Indignation and unrest in the United States over the Cuban insurrection were, as we have said, the fuses which set off the blast in 1898. Cuba's troubles were an old story. A Ten Years' War for independence during the 1870's had furnished the Grant administration with plenty of headaches, especially in connection with the breaking up of filibustering expeditions organized on American soil by Cuban revolutionaries. But the government of Grant was not bedeviled by the complex issues which faced the administrations of Cleveland and McKinley, there was in the earlier era comparatively little public excitement in the United States and no impulse either to annex the island or to go to war with Spain for the sake of winning its independence. By this time Cuba was closely tied to the United States through its trade in sugar, the plantations were owned by American, Spanish, and native proprietors, but the independence movement found little, if any, support from them. Even the absentee investors in the United States, though harassed by the corruption and inefficiency of successive Spanish administrations, frowned upon independence to the very last. They of course feared only the worst from the degraded, revolution-minded Negroes and mongrel whites that made up the bulk of the population. Cuban

prosperity depended on free trade in sugar with the United States. When Congress imposed a duty in 1894, the unhappy people of the island, driven to the most desperate straits, resorted to a ferocious revolution the following year.

The second Cuban war for independence was, as a matter of fact, carefully planned in advance by refugee patriots in New York who eagerly seized the opportunity that the economic prostration of 1894 threw into their hands. Led by Estrada Palma and José Martí, the Cuban Junta of New York mobilized the sympathy and financial support of Cuban exiles all over the United States, particularly in Florida. Cuban societies became both numerous and popular, and grew as a potent influence both in spurring on the revolution in their homeland and in arousing sympathy and support from persons in the United States. Many Cubans followed the example set by numerous Irish-American conspirators of the 1880's who were bent on stirring up revolution in Ireland. Under the easy naturalization laws of the United States they became citizens; they then enlisted as filibusters or returned to their native land under the guise of peaceful American citizens but really as revolutionists. When jailed by the authorities, they appealed to Washington for protection.

It must be said that under both Cleveland and McKinley the American government gave the filibusters short shrift, though it often interceded in behalf of naturalized citizens taken prisoner. It expanded its coastal patrol and set a vigilant watch for escaping vessels from New York to the Rio Grande. The odds were much in favor of the filibusters: there were over five thousand miles of shoreline to watch, the bayous of the Gulf Coast and the keys of Florida offered unexcelled opportunities to escape detection in making their preparations; and the voyage to Cuba was so easy that small craft could be used to good advantage. Most of all, perhaps, the leanings of the American population were heavily pro-Cuban and, as in the days of the mid-century when filibustering against Caribbean countries was so prevalent, the Cubans had little difficulty in making ready their expeditions and gathering recruits. Nevertheless, out of seventy-one recorded departures, the United States patrol stopped thirty-three; twenty-seven reached Cuban shores, and the remainder were intercepted by the Spanish and English. Obviously filibustering was not destined to be an influential factor in winning Cuban independence.

Cuban warfare was commonly savage, but in both wars of independence the insurgents set the example for brutality and destruction. Under the leadership of General Gomez they systematically

burned and destroyed the property of the plantations, the homes of the laborers, and the standing crop of cane wherever they could make raids successfully, on the theory of driving the homeless people into the ranks of revolution and rendering the land valueless to the Spaniards. The latter under General Weyler countered by ordering the people into concentration camps, where the scanty food supply left large numbers to starve. Both sides thus conducted "total war"; Weyler, it appears, was gaining on the revolutionists in 1897, when the Spanish government, frightened by the echo of angry cries from the United States and perhaps a little horrified itself (a Liberal ministry under Sr. Sagasta had taken office), ordered him from his command.

The temper of the times being what it was, the chances are that the insurrection, of 1895 would have drawn more than ordinary attention from the United States in any event. All the signs pointed to an increasing focus of public interest on the Caribbean, but to dissociate that sea from the island of Cuba was out of the question. The two were simply inseparable in the American mind. Jefferson had marked the island for eventual acquisition before 1800. Purchase and admission to the Union as a state had been advocated and accepted as the desirable solution until the time of the Civil War. But that form of annexation was repugnant to the expansionists of 1898, who were race purists; they were fully alive to the hideous social condition of Cuba. A proposal in 1895 to purchase the island got no support. Mahan, Lodge, and their contemporaries were content with advocating independence. But Cuban liberation meant clearing Spain from the Caribbean and sweeping away the historic barrier to American predominance to the south; it meant that Cuba would henceforth move as a satellite within the American sphere. Though they did not say so, these men could hardly have missed this important point.

It was not missed in fact by many of the newspapers of the Middle West. Fully in accord with the cause of Cuban independence, editors in that section of the country were nevertheless resolved to measure American intervention in terms of national self-interest. They perceived a positive value to the United States in the elimination of Spain from the Caribbean, and frankly built a bridge between the current emotional upsurge in favor of a free Cuba and the desirability of that outcome from the standpoint of American interest. We may assume that the same was true of William Jennings Bryan, so widely accepted in the West at that time as the "peerless leader." A warm friend of Cuban independence and a volunteer in the army after the war broke out, Bryan was also known as a

strong advocate of the Monroe Doctrine and of American control of an isthman canal.

Warming the beat of the popular heart for Cuba was the peculiar contribution of the yellow press of New York, whose syndicated articles to some extent were reprinted throughout the country. William Randolph Hearst of the *New York Journal* and Joseph Pulitzer of the *New York World*, waging deadly war on each other for the largest circulation, found in horror stories about Cuba and insults to American citizens and the American flag at the hands of Spaniards the surest ladder to journalistic popularity. Branches of the Cuban Junta supplied copy to the newspapers, but Pulitzer and particularly Hearst made their own stories. The thorough methods of Gomez remained a secret; no breath of criticism ever smirched the purity of the Cuban cause. But the sinister figure of Weyler, drawn in the murkiest colors that imaginative journalism could devise, rekindled the ancient national passion against Spain. Far from content with stories of atrocities by Spaniards against Cubans, these unscrupulous journalists feasted on tales of outrages by Spanish officials against passengers on board American vessels in Cuban harbors. Having an interest only in the sadistic, they played fast and loose with the reputations of innocent women in order to "prove" the bestiality of Spanish boarding parties. The involvement of so many Cuban-Americans, actively engaged in espionage and the carrying of dispatches between the Junta in New York and the rebel chiefs on the island (a fact withheld by the press), made the stories the more plausible.

With the American public thus thoroughly indoctrinated, it was a scoop for Hearst when a Cuban spy thrust into his hands the facsimile of a private letter written by Sr Dupuy de Lôme, the Spanish minister in Washington, to a fellow countryman in Havana. The letter had been filched from the latter's desk, Hearst bought the facsimile, but the Cuban emissary made copies of the letter and handed them around to the press throughout the country. The sensational value of the communication was limited to a caustic characterization of McKinley, whom the minister described as

weak and a bidder for the admiration of the crowd, besides being a would-be politician who tries to leave a door open behind himself while keeping on good terms with the jingoes of his party.

Public men, including diplomats, have said much harsher things about each other than this in their private correspondence. Sr de Lôme's misfortune was to have his letter stolen; his unpardonable sin was to have insulted the President of the United States in the

newspapers.⁴ Having received advance information that his letter was to be published, he saved his own dignity by immediately telegraphing his resignation to Madrid.

The damage to the Spanish cause, however, had been done. Publication came on February 9, 1898; with the sinking of the "Maine" in Havana harbor six days later, the cup of national wrath overflowed at last. Though the cause of the explosion was purely speculative, and though the government of the United States itself made no charges, the *Journal* set about its task at once of "proving" that the Spaniards had done the job, while the *World* "polled" every Congressional district in the country to "prove" that the people favored war. The following month, when a naval board of inquiry rendered its opinion that the vessel had been blown up by a submarine mine, it was the popular verdict that Spain was guilty.⁵ The country was now ready for the famous slogan—"Remember the Maine; to hell with Spain!"

As has been said, the pressure for strong measures against Spain from the outset came from the general public, the newspapers, and members of Congress, not from the government. The Senate was ready for intervention in February 1896, when by a large majority it passed a resolution favoring recognition of Cuban independence. A move by the Chief Executive to give effect to the resolution was all that was necessary to precipitate war. But President Cleveland was of an entirely different turn of mind. Through the first year of rebellion he had followed a hands-off policy; instead he engaged Great Britain in the quarrel over Venezuela. In April 1896, no doubt in part to blunt the edge of Congressional temper, he offered his aid to the Spanish government in bringing the insurrection to an end. He wrote:

What the United States desires to do, if the way can be pointed out is to co-operate with Spain in the immediate pacification of the island on such a plan as, leaving Spain her rights of sovereignty, shall yet secure to the people of the island all such rights and powers of local self-government as they can reasonably ask.⁶

Cleveland advocated autonomy for Cuba, whereas the majority in Congress were resolved on independence and eager to interfere

⁴ This extract from the de Lôme letter appears in many books. The full text is to be found in Moore, *Digest of International Law*, VI, 176-77.

⁵ Considering the previous lack of scruple shown by the Cuban rebels, they are much the more likely to have done the job. The Spaniards were trying to keep out of trouble, not to get in.

⁶ *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1897, p. 543.

forcibly. The Spaniards took the President's communication of April as merely a gesture and refused the proffered co-operation. Cleveland moved a step nearer the Congressional position in his Annual Message of December 1896, when he hinted that intervention might *eventually* become necessary. He agreed fundamentally with Congress that the United States was concerned with stopping the slaughter in Cuba, but he refused to admit that the time to act had arrived. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee at once countered with the offer of a joint resolution in favor of independence, and presented a telling report citing a wealth of European precedent justifying intervention. The Committee had no difficulty in showing that European powers had repeatedly intervened in support of the independence of small nations and had justified their action on general grounds such as "impediments to commerce," "humanity," "the repose of Europe," and so on. It would be straining at gnats to find any distinction between such grounds as these and the ones currently being offered in the United States in justification for concern about Cuba. The fact remains that the geographical propinquity of the island to this country, its intimate economic and social ties, put it beyond the power of American opinion to ignore Cuba's fate. Nor was it necessary for the Committee to argue for intervention on grounds of "economic interest"; elements in human emotion—pity, fear, horror, contempt, and so on—are to say the least as powerful motivations in life as so-called economic interest. As has been shown already, they proved the compelling impulses in this case.

There is, however, another interesting facet to this problem that should not escape our attention. Congress and the country at large were at this time unquestionably more insistent than ever upon an American-owned isthmian canal. The identity between the men leading this movement and those in the vanguard of the Cuban cause is surely a strong, though inferential, argument for the inseparability of the two movements. In addition to the personalities previously dwelt upon—Lodge, Roosevelt, Mahan, Bryan—it is worth mentioning that one of the leading Senate interventionists, the Democratic Senator John T. Morgan of Alabama, a member of the Foreign Relations Committee, five years later became the foremost fighter for the choice of a Nicaraguan canal route.

Grover Cleveland, on the other hand, was an old-fashioned isolationist, well known for his indifference to the canal. Yet Cleveland temporarily at least lost his emotional balance in the violent altercation he precipitated with the British government in 1895. In criticism of

the Cleveland diplomacy, it may be said that it was unfortunate that the Chief Executive was so ready to follow the red herring of the Venezuela boundary squabble and so unwilling to recognize the force of the movement for Cuban intervention. A stronger tone than a mere polite "by your leave" used on Spain in 1895 might well have hastened the desired result and perhaps avoided a conflict. The Spaniards were slothful in recognizing the underlying menace of the American attitude; Cleveland's moderation helped to lull them. Numerous joint resolutions offered in the Senate during the winter months of 1896-97 demanded drastic action ranging all the way from recognition of the belligerent rights of the Cubans to sending American battleships to force the Spaniards to yield. The resolutions were the writing on the wall; yet Cleveland blocked them all.

No doubt the President was exacerbated by these continued Congressional attempts to interfere with the prerogatives of the Executive, nevertheless a more skillful Chief Executive, it seems, one who was prepared to cope realistically with the arguments for expansion and intervention, could the better have steered the ship of state on its course. Cleveland merely treated Spain to the spectacle of a hopeless quarrel between the executive and the legislative branches of the government. He has justly been depicted as a man of courage; he was also a man of temper, with an immature conception of foreign affairs. He checked the interventionists for the time being; he did not silence the commotion. Perhaps the explosion of 1898 was the more violent for having been suppressed.⁷

The new President, William McKinley, sent a fresh minister to Madrid in September 1897 with orders to say, in effect, that "something had to be done." Again choice of method and time was left to Spain. McKinley thought of buying the island and turning it loose; but the practicability of that approach was doubtful. The American government as distinct from Congress, created the impression it would be satisfied with Cuban autonomy, but it failed to be explicit on the question of how autonomy was to be secured. European diplomats, with a keener sense of approaching crisis than the American administration, asked the minister for a more precise statement of American intentions; all he could say was that the United States "sought neither annexation nor a protectorate, but only peace."⁸

⁷ Cleveland's diplomacy created only blind alleys in important questions. Compare the methods he used in the Hawaiian situation (chapter 44, below). The violent assertion of supremacy in the Western Hemisphere made by his Secretary of State in the quarrel with Great Britain proved a boomerang in the effort to win the confidence of the Latin-American nations.

⁸ *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1898, p. 580.

Hopeful straws in the wind began to blow from Madrid, nevertheless Weyler was relieved of his command, and the severities of the concentration system were ordered mitigated. Serious gestures were also made in the direction of autonomy, provided the rebels would lay down their arms. It was too late to hope for the success of such a move, however; long bent on independence, the revolutionists were not now to be pacified, when things had at last begun to move in their favor. Actually, in spite of the departure of Weyler, it was not found possible to brighten the situation much in Cuba.

How long such an impasse could have continued is a matter of idle speculation. Sr. de Lôme's unfortunate opinions were ventilated in the United States on February 9, 1898, the battleship "Maine" went down in Havana harbor on February 15; a month later Senator Proctor of Vermont, who had refused to join the war hawks, confirmed the worst accounts of Spanish cruelties by paying a personal visit to the island and reporting what he had seen in a speech that received wide attention. This was a sign that moderate opinion in the United States would no longer brook delay.

Convinced at last of its peril but still moving so as to save its self-respect, the Spanish government met two specific demands of the McKinley administration on April 9: it granted an armistice until the following October 1 and revoked the *reconcentrado* order. Then under cover of a formula, peace negotiations were to be worked out with the insurgents, with the tacit understanding that independence would be the ultimate result. The American minister was certain of this, and he so informed the administration in Washington. By this time, however, the warlike feeling in Congress had passed storm proportions. McKinley was worn down at last. By sending a message to Congress on April 11, he resigned the control into the hands of that uncontrollable body, knowing that war would be the result. He had intended to send his message without waiting to hear from Spain, but he delayed a few days in order to allow the evacuation of American citizens from Cuba. In the message the President asked for authority from Congress to use the armed forces to end the conflict in Cuba; the Spanish concessions really made the request irrelevant, but McKinley did not change the phrasing of his message. He merely mentioned the Spanish offer at the end.

Whether a statesmanlike re-writing of the message, with proper emphasis on the concessions, would have saved the situation is, of course, one of the imponderables. As was to be expected, Congress ignored the concessions and responded with a joint resolution on

April 20 declaring Cuba free, demanding that Spain immediately withdraw and directing the President to use the armed forces to make her do so. An amendment to the resolution asserted that the United States would not itself annex or exercise control over the island once its pacification had been established. Anticipating defeat, the Spanish government nevertheless rejected the ultimatum, and a formal declaration of war followed on the 25th. Hostilities had begun in fact on the 21st, and on the 24th Dewey's squadron in Hong Kong had received orders to sail for the Philippines. An unknown equation affecting the Far East was thus immediately introduced into a war ostensibly for the liberation of Cuba.

It is a curious fact that the first decisive blow was struck in the Philippines. Dewey destroyed the Spanish fleet in Manila Bay on May 1, only a week after the declaration of war. The Spanish garrison holding the city subsequently surrendered to an American expeditionary force, after going through the forms of defending itself. The rest of the fighting took place in the West Indies, and was over before the end of July. With scant hope of victory anywhere, the Spaniards concentrated on saving their honor. Their ill-equipped fleet in Atlantic waters met total destruction outside of the harbor of Santiago, Cuba, on July 3, and the land forces on the island then surrendered to an enthusiastic American army of regulars and volunteers. Puerto Rico soon after capitulated to a small expeditionary force. We cannot say that any of the American naval or military operations were conducted with a deliberately formed intention to erect an American maritime empire on the ruins of the Spanish; yet the results were so striking and the advantages so obvious that that is precisely what happened.

So far we have dealt only with the strictly Spanish-American phases of this conflict. Our comprehension of it would be limited, however, were we to ignore the watchfulness with which the European powers and even Japan followed its course. Spain had hoped to bid for collective European support as early as 1896, and she found a rather timid champion in Germany. Alarmed by the threat that he believed he saw to the principle of monarchy, the Kaiser suggested the possibility of some sort of European gesture. Germany would not take the lead, but her prompting stimulated the interest of Austria-Hungary and the Pope. The latter was influential in inducing Spain to concede the armistice of April 9, 1897, to the Cubans. But hints to the other powers, particularly Britain and France, that it would be desirable to unite in more forceful action, perhaps a naval demonstration, to warn the Americans against mak-

ing war, fell on deaf ears. In the earlier half of the century, we recall, Spain had leaned on British and French support to help her in Cuba; Britain and France had not then hesitated to tell the United States they were opposed to a change in the ownership of the island. But it was idle to expect the British government to take the same attitude in 1898—it did not set the same store by its own Caribbean interests, and by the end of the century it was in process of reconciling itself to the American hegemony that loomed in the West. Any European intervention that would promise success in 1898 hinged upon British leadership. But Britain had always refused to head a European front, though to be sure she had during the mid-century used an entente with France as a makeweight against the United States in the Caribbean.

After the Spanish concessions of April 9, the British Ambassador in Washington, Sir Julian Pauncefote, assumed that the reason for hostilities was past. Consequently he consented to draft a note in behalf of the foreign diplomatic corps to be presented to the State Department and expressing the hope that the issues would be peacefully settled. When translated into French, the official language of diplomacy, his words read somewhat more aggressively than he had intended. The note, however, was never delivered because the governments in Europe one and all refused to countenance it. The American government had in fact already received assurances from the British Foreign Office that it would follow no line contrary to American wishes. The substance, then, of these European feelers is just this: Come what may, Britain was prepared to leave the United States free to deal with Spain. All of the Continental powers, including France, wanted to prevent the war because they dreaded the accession of power it would bring this country, they had no feasible opportunity for impeding it, however, and accordingly kept a strict official silence. But in general the European newspaper press felt the need of no such self-restraint, and from the beginning treated the United States to a thorough tongue-lashing. The contrasting tone of encouragement adopted by English newspapers merely served to illuminate the departure of the British from general European policy.

Dewey's victory at Manila created an important new theater of war and laid open the fate of all of the Spanish islands in the western Pacific. Since it was not clear that the Americans intended permanent conquest—the United States itself had no mind on the subject at the time—the Germans now felt they had an opening. Shortly after the battle both a British and a German squadron appeared in Manila Bay and remained there to watch proceedings through the

summer. It must be remembered that the city of Manila and the Islands still remained in Spanish hands. The British commander, Captain Chichester, exhibited a friendly manner toward Dewey; but the German, with an armament heavier than the American, aroused antagonism. Admiral Diederichs was fresh from Kiaochow, the port in North China seized by Germany the previous year, and it required no stretch of the imagination to see that he was sent to Manila in the hope of reaping advantages from the American victory. The Germans fancied that the Americans would decide not to complete their conquest of the Philippines, in which case they hoped to acquire the Islands for themselves. This would be an important step toward a German empire in the Pacific, for which the Kaiser's government was angling. Prince Henry of Prussia cabled home hopefully that the Filipinos would welcome Germany's protection. Berlin proved very cautious, however; not receiving British support, it had no intention of crossing swords with the United States. It proposed simply to wait and see; if the United States withdrew, it hoped to make a deal with Madrid for German acquisition of the Philippines. If, on the other hand, the Americans stayed in the Philippines, Germany intended to turn her attention to the other Spanish-owned archipelagoes in the Pacific. Spain could give them to Germany as a consolation prize. It might be added that in spite of her well-meant caution Germany reaped the fruit of American ill will; the disposition of the German squadron in Manila Bay hampered Dewey and drew his wrath openly.

In contrast to this evidence of greedy expectancy on the part of the Germans, the British by word and deed encouraged their American brethren to stay in the Philippines. Believing that the Spanish empire was sure to break up, they realized the important effects bound to be felt in the distribution of power in the Pacific Ocean. Distrusting Germany, they did not propose that she should have these strategic islands. The United States, on the other hand, was looked upon as an excellent balance in place of the Spaniard. In addition to the newly emphasized trend toward Anglo-American solidarity, there was the historic fact that the United States had been a political influence in the Far East for more than half a century. Its policies in that region had been habitually geared to those of Great Britain, even in times when relations elsewhere had been stormy. Rather than let the Germans slip into the Philippines, Mr. Balfour, the British Foreign Secretary, was authority for the statement that the British would insist upon taking an option for themselves.

The United States began to show its hand definitely early in June 1898, when the Secretary of State, William R. Day, communicated to the American Ambassador in Great Britain, John Hay, a sketch of desirable terms. This was a month before the defeat of the Spanish squadron in Cuba and before any definitive conquests had been made of Spanish soil. The proposed terms embraced (1) delivery of Cuba to the United States, to hold pending the establishment of a stable native government; (2) cession of Puerto Rico in lieu of a money indemnity; (3) retention of the Philippines by Spain, but the United States to select a port in the islands, which Spain was then to assign her; (4) an island in the Marianas also to be made over as a coaling station to the United States. Thus the American government began to grasp its opportunity to capitalize the war. Puerto Rico would be a long step in asserting mastery in the Caribbean and the United States would have a controlling hand in the destiny of Cuba; the annexation of Hawaii was by this time in its last stages; and the acquisition of a port in the Marianas and another in the Philippines would complete the route to China under the American flag.

In a little more than two months from the date these terms were outlined, the military operations of the war had been finished. Cuba and Puerto Rico were reduced in July; an expeditionary force of fifteen thousand men disembarked near Manila and captured the city on August 13; and while en route to the Philippines a detachment from their expedition surprised the Spaniards at Guam in the Marianas and left a garrison in their place. Meanwhile peace conversations had already opened, with France acting as intermediary. On the day previous to the fall of Manila, a protocol outlining the preliminary conditions of peace and providing for a conference to be held in Paris was signed at Washington.

The terms pertaining to the Spanish possessions in the Caribbean were agreed upon in the protocol; Spain was to relinquish Cuba and cede Puerto Rico outright; she was to do the same with an island in the Marianas. Since the Navy picked Guam as the best suited for its purposes, the final choice fell on this island. Indefiniteness attached only to the question of the Philippines. As we have seen, the original attack on the Spanish squadron, as ordered by Theodore Roosevelt, the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, was apparently intended only as a war measure. Considering the lively interest of Roosevelt in the Orient and his undoubted appreciation of the strategic value of the archipelago, however, it is certainly not likely that he was blind to the future. At any rate, the battle of Manila Bay

fulfilled a dramatic purpose it forced a reaction from previous opinion in the United States. The sending of an expedition in July to capture Manila itself suggests that the die was cast rather quickly. At least six members of the President's cabinet are known to have favored by this date the retention of a permanent position in the Islands, three of them wanted the whole archipelago, the other three were content with a naval base only. The President wavered somewhere between these two desires. When Secretary Day, who had made a motion in favor of the naval base only, reproached him for not putting the question to a vote, McKinley replied with a twinkle: "No, Judge, I was afraid it would be carried."

By the time the five American peace commissioners departed for Paris in September, the question was still partially open. The Philippines were admitted in their instructions to "stand upon a different basis" from the Caribbean islands. Nevertheless, McKinley was aware of the link between the Islands and China. He told the commissioners:

It is just to use every legitimate means for the enlargement of American trade, but we seek no advantages in the Orient which are not common to all. Asking only the open door for ourselves, we are ready to accord the open door to others. The commercial opportunity which is naturally and inevitably associated with this new opening depends less on large territorial possession than upon an adequate commercial basis and upon broad and equal privileges.⁹

The American consuls at Shanghai and Singapore, among others, had already pointed this out and were warm advocates of acquiring the whole archipelago. Possibly McKinley was watching public opinion, as he did not go thus far in September. He had progressed beyond the naval base idea, however, since the instructions specifically stipulated a demand for the whole island of Luzon and for equal trade privileges in the other islands retained by Spain. Between then and December 10, the date of the signing of the final treaty, public opinion in the United States became increasingly articulate in favor of a complete cession. Business interests on both coasts adopted the view that the Islands were essential for building up the China trade and perhaps would supply an important new market themselves. The religious press stressed the moral obligation not to neglect the Filipinos; in McKinley's phrases, "there was nothing left for us to do but to take them all, and to educate the Filipinos, and uplift and civilize and Christianize them, and by God's grace do

⁹ *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1898, p. 907.

the very best we could by them. . . ."¹⁰ In an age given to much rationalization of this kind, this was an argument that carried weight. It made a deep and long-lived impression, and was probably the reason why the alternative of presenting the Filipinos with their independence was glossed over.

Independence was in fact the objective that the natives under their leader, Emilio Aguinaldo, had in mind. The genesis of Filipino liberation preceded Dewey's expedition, and Aguinaldo, who consulted Dewey before the latter's departure from Hong Kong, expected fully to receive American co-operation in obtaining it. The Filipinos rose after the battle of Manila Bay, organized a revolutionary government in May, and planned to drive the Spaniards from the Islands themselves. Though he made no pledges to Aguinaldo, Dewey nevertheless shows in his telegraphic report to the Navy Department, June 27, that he regarded the Filipinos as friendly and co-operative with the Americans, and competent to govern themselves. He discounted their ability to capture Manila unaided, but allowed them to have a share in the siege. The contrary view was taken in official Washington, however, which sent explicit orders not to co-operate with the insurgents nor to divide the responsibility with them for preserving law and order.

Naturally there was a breach. Aguinaldo belatedly demanded a definite understanding with the American government, but the latter flatly rejected his overtures. Washington never seems to have given serious thought to the Filipino aspirations; it frowned upon them from the very beginning. Just why it refused to consider the idea of a Filipino protectorate, in which the natives would be given a large measure of autonomy and strategic requirements would be set up to satisfy the American desire for a base, is hard to understand. As Commodore Dewey looked at the matter in the first place, the Filipinos were "far superior in their intelligence and more capable of self-government than the natives of Cuba, and," he added, "I am familiar with both races."¹¹ Dewey, however, altered his opinion subsequently, after the Filipinos had turned their arms against the Americans. Having been refused any compromise, Aguinaldo opened hostilities in February 1899. A most effective guerrilla warfare was kept up against American troops for more than two years.

¹⁰ This is part of a familiar quotation from McKinley, to be found in many books. The President said it to a delegation of Methodist ministers more than a year after the treaty. See F. R. Dulles, *America in the Pacific* (Boston, 1932), pp. 241-42.

¹¹ Quoted in F. E. Chadwick, *The Spanish-American War* (New York, 1911), II, 368.

The war resulted in a complete partition of the Spanish empire. The American government became so bent on having all of the Philippines that, when the Spanish commissioners objected, it made a gratuitous offer of twenty million dollars. The Germans bought the rest of the Spanish Pacific islands—the Carolines, the Pelews, and the Marianas—for \$4,500,000. Since these all lay on the flank of the American route to Manila, German possession of them qualified the strategic value of the American route. No one in 1898 of course could foretell that a score of years later the German islands would fall as spoils of war to a power whose ambitions for dominance in the western Pacific were even more extensive.

The Philippines issue almost defeated the treaty of peace in the Senate, where over a third of the membership was politically in opposition to the administration. Apparently the question was chiefly one of "imperialism," since efforts to grant the Filipinos independence, or even autonomy, could make no headway. It is true that this was the first occasion on which the United States proposed to take over an outright dependency. Little protest was raised, however, against annexing Puerto Rico, which had likewise to be kept in tutelage. The explanation for the inconsistency, of course, rests on geographic grounds, not on principle. Puerto Rico, everyone could agree, was essential to obtain superiority in the Caribbean; the Philippines were a distant archipelago far removed from the area of continental or hemispheric security. We shall see that the administration had had difficulty also in carrying Hawaiian annexation, and had had to abandon the treaty method in favor of the joint resolution.¹²

McKinley had endeavored to anticipate Senatorial opposition by naming three Senators on the peace commission of five. Two of these, both Republicans, endorsed the cause of outright possession of the Philippines from the start. The other Senator, a Democrat, went to Paris in opposition; nevertheless, when the administration finally decided in favor of taking the Islands, he kept his commission and signed the treaty. Subsequently he defended it in the Senate, and after ratification became a judge of a federal circuit court. Patronage and offers of reward in federal posts were a factor in winning votes. But they were not the decisive factor. The final vote on the treaty, 57 to 27, wherein a change of two votes would have reversed the result, was not on strict party lines. Some Democrats, including the prominent Senator Morgan of Alabama, were

¹² Chapter 44, pp 677-78

heartily in favor. Certain doubtful votes on the Democratic side were influenced by William Jennings Bryan, who came to Washington especially for that purpose. As long as the war had been for "Cuban independence," Bryan had advocated it; now that the Philippines issue had become the outstanding one, the Democratic party leader disliked it. Nevertheless, apparently fearing to split his party on the issue of "imperialism" and wishing to mobilize his forces in a fight for free silver in the next election campaign, he decided to support the treaty. His supporters and opponents united in agreeing that Bryan's influence was controlling with the doubtful Senators.

"Imperialism" became a live issue in the next presidential campaign, owing mainly to the efforts of a group of anti-imperialists who banded together in a League. Many of the anti-imperialists were able men, but they had no bond of union other than their desire to champion the Filipinos. Nothing but devotion to an abstract principle could hold together such men as Andrew Carnegie, Carl Schurz, Grover Cleveland, and William Jennings Bryan. When it came to practical party politics, it was not so easy to keep together, other issues that pressed more nearly home, like the trusts and free silver and the personality of Bryan himself, destroyed all possibility of collaboration, and the question of "imperialism" faded from the popular mind before the campaign was over.

It should be emphasized in conclusion that the anti-imperialists did not level their attacks at the fruits of the war. Imperialism is a concept of kaleidoscopic meanings, "anti-imperialism" in 1898 meant opposition to Philippine *annexation*. It did *not* mean opposition to the original conquest of the archipelago from Spain, nor did it mean the rejection of some special connection with the people of the islands. The anti-imperialists advocated Filipino self-government, but, like Aguinaldo, they expected the United States to guarantee the independence of the Islands or at least to enter into a collective agreement with other powers so to do. An arrogant and inexperienced officialdom in Washington, by overriding the sensibilities of the natives, barred the door to an enlightened and responsible solution of this sort. Then the Filipino insurrection, with its emotional challenge to the "white man's burden" idea, further obscured the basic meaning of the war. The war for Cuban independence accomplished the century-old diplomatic effort to obtain mastery in the Caribbean, the conquest of the Philippines reinforced the tie with China, a tie that was already knotted. With neither of these gains was there any substantial quarrel in 1898.

CHAPTER 41

THE PANAMA REVOLUTION OF 1903

THE FOREMOST AMBITION of the United States in 1900 was to build a transoceanic canal in Central America. To secure the exclusive right of way regarded as indispensable for this purpose, four obstacles had to be overcome. The first and perhaps most delicate was the dissolution of the partnership with Great Britain under the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty of 1850. This was achieved by the Second Hay-Pauncefote Treaty in November 1901, a formula under cover of which Britain resigned her half-interest in the affairs of Central America and gave the United States a free hand in coping with the problem of a canal. Thereafter it remained to make the final choice of a route, to liquidate the private interests which already enjoyed transit concessions, and to conclude the necessary diplomatic arrangement with the government of the country whose territory the canal would cut. The achievement of these three objectives seemed to be purely nominal. So it very probably would have been, had the United States kept to the choice which, until 1900, was virtually taken for granted—the Nicaraguan route. On this route an American corporation, the Maritime Canal Company, held an option, it had done no work, however, and its legal rights were for sale at a nominal figure. Previous agreements with the government of Nicaragua, moreover, facilitated a definitive arrangement with that country respecting questions of control or ownership of a zone to be established along the proposed canal.¹

Very intricate were the circumstances embracing the alternative route, the Isthmus of Panama. Panama was a province of Colombia, administered direct from Bogotá. Local disorders and even secessionist conspiracies were common enough, but the Isthmus had always been treated as a part of the territory of Colombia. A privately owned railroad had been operating successfully over the route for the past forty-five years. But the principal complication in Panama was due to the New Panama Canal Company, the French concern which had absorbed the assets of the bankrupt enterprise of de Lesseps. The New Company, incorporated in 1894, held the canal concession from Colombia. Unable to advance the work begun by de Lesseps, it survived solely on the hope of selling its interests to

¹ See the Isthmian Security Cases in Part I, especially pp. 139-59.

the United States. It turned this job over in 1896 to a brilliant and tireless New York lawyer, William Nelson Cromwell. For more than four years Cromwell had only the slenderest of prospects. The New Company was all but unknown in the United States, and the trend was wholly in favor of Nicaragua. But Cromwell had a genius for making contacts, and by 1899 he had succeeded in throwing enough doubt into the minds of Congressmen to induce them to authorize an investigation of both of the routes.

The findings of the investigation commission, which for two years carried on field work in Europe and in Central America, were mildly in favor of Panama. The length of this route was considerably less, and the commission seemed to think there was some prospect for a natural-level canal, which was obviously out of the question for the Nicaraguan route. The factor that weighed decisively with the commission, however, was the refusal of the company directors in Paris to come to reasonable terms. On this account the commission, considering that the cost of buying out the company would exceed the saving in construction costs on the shorter route, recommended the choice of Nicaragua. The company directors put a value of \$109,141,500 on their Panama assets, which the commission appraised at \$40,000,000.

After the commission made its final report in November 1901 and everything seemed to be set for the adoption by Congress of the Nicaraguan route, the French directors were brought to their senses through the quickness of one Bunau-Varilla. This gentleman, with a persuasive power second to none, had gone to the United States in the preceding January, had sized up the situation there, and then returned to his native land. Bunau-Varilla was a one-man lobby. He was not in the employ of the company, and while in the United States he did not associate himself with Cromwell. Though standing to profit as a stockholder from any indemnity paid his company, he had an infectious enthusiasm for the cause of Panama that made him an active figure long after the money settlement with the French company had been concluded. Bunau-Varilla was on the spot in Paris when the Walker commission visited there in 1900; three years later he elbowed himself into the position of first minister to the United States from the Republic of Panama. At the moment in 1901 when all seemed lost for his fellow stockholders in Paris, he spread across the pages of the leading Parisian daily the terms recommended by the Walker commission. The effect was electrical: the directors cabled a cash offer of \$40,000,000. This reduced the total estimated cost of the Panama waterway to \$184,000,000, or about

five and a half million less than that estimated for Nicaragua. The comparatively slight difference between the two estimates (both of which fell far below the actual outlay on Panama) can hardly be regarded as the determining factor, however.

Behind the scenes the new President, Theodore Roosevelt, and the leader of the Republican party, Senator Hanna of Ohio, had already caught the spirit of Bunau-Varilla and Cromwell. Prodded by Roosevelt, the Walker commission now filed a supplementary report in favor of Panama. The House of Representatives had already declared itself overwhelmingly for the Nicaraguan route; through Senator Spooner of Wisconsin, however, the Chief Executive got an amendment before the Senate giving Panama the preference. The Spooner amendment authorized the President to buy out the New Company at the figure offered, to acquire perpetual control of a Canal Zone from Colombia, and to proceed with the work of construction. If, however, satisfactory terms with the company or with Colombia were not reached within a "reasonable time," the President was to turn to Nicaragua.

It was an uphill contest, worthy of such ardent spirits as Roosevelt and Hanna. Nicaragua was known to command the majority in the Senate as well as in the House, and Senator Morgan of Alabama, the sponsor of this route for upwards of six years, was a hard-fighting opponent. There is a story, which stems from a remark afterward passed by Bunau-Varilla, no friend of Cromwell, to the effect that the latter made a sixty-thousand-dollar offering to the Republican party chest in 1900. This is commonly said to account for Hanna's affections for Panama. The question cannot so easily be dismissed, however. The story, which was never proved true, became public gossip ten years after, when in the course of a Senate investigation there was a strong desire to find a scapegoat for what many still regarded as the wrong choice. It is a common human failing to attribute cheap motives to strong-minded men. Hanna's record as a public man has always been an open book. He systematically marshaled large contributions for the party but had a well-established reputation for turning a deaf ear to pleas for special favors. He is known to have ordered refunds in cases where the donors were suspected of attempting to buy the party's support.

A deeper spirit fired Hanna to throw himself into the cause of Panama, as it did Theodore Roosevelt. Moreover, during the course of the debate, Senator Morgan lost no opportunity to retail the story of the Panama lobby; the Senate and the country in general had abundant information in 1902 with which to repel the propaganda

of this group. Neither Cromwell nor Bunau-Varilla was spared during the contest. But in the long run Hanna outwitted his opponents and converted a hopeless minority into a sweeping majority for the Spooner amendment. In an exhaustive address on June 5, 1898, he presented Panama as the better choice from the standpoint of good business and common sense. Hanna may have exaggerated, but his information was derived largely from the report of the Walker commission and he made it ring with conviction.

Chance and the labors of Cromwell and Bunau-Varilla also worked in Hanna's favor. Fears of seismic and volcanic activity had already been aired. Both routes were believed to be within an earthquake belt. On May 29 Mount Momotombo in Nicaragua, one hundred miles from the proposed route, was reported to have erupted. Two weeks later the alert Bunau-Varilla had a Nicaraguan stamp depicting Mount Momotombo in action on the desk of every Senator, with the notation that the stamp was "an official witness of the volcanic activity of Nicaragua."² The engaging Frenchman himself set great store by this harmless prank. Whatever his enthusiasm for himself as the star performer, however, it would seem reasonable to conclude that the Panama route triumphed through the cumulative effects of the activities of all its supporters and of the playing of time and chance in their favor. For better or worse, a resolute minority wore down a wavering majority in fair contest.

Meanwhile the Republic of Colombia was an interested, but helpless spectator. Even more than the French company it had an important stake in the selection of the Panama route. All parties in Colombia grasped the permanent benefits that would be theirs, once the Isthmus became one of the world's great highways. Colombia had been competing with Nicaragua for just such an opportunity for more than half a century, furthermore, she had the advantage of valuable properties already on the isthmus. In addition to the New Company's assets there was the thriving Panama Railroad, which regularly paid into the national treasury a rental of two hundred and fifty thousand dollars a year. The promise of an interoceanic waterway furnished a positive guaranty of a greatly expanded prosperity. Yet a diplomatic contest ensued between the United States and this little republic that within three years widened into a complete breach.

² Dr. Graham Stuart writes this interesting comment. "I have heard it stated by a Nicaraguan that they have no active volcanoes in Nicaragua and that if you use a microscope the smoke above the mountain on the stamp is seen to be a wreath of Nicaraguan coat of arms. The last smoke and ashes eruption—no lava—was Coriquina in 1835."

Anxious to keep abreast of the transaction in Washington, the government at Bogotá stationed an envoy in the United States for the express purpose of helping to promote the cause of the Panama route. The Colombian representative, Dr Carlos Silva, grasped the importance of a definite agreement with the American government; in January 1902, when the Walker commission finally threw its influence on the side of the Panama route, he drew up the plan of a treaty which he thought would fairly meet the needs of both countries. With the exception of the amount of the indemnity and the annual rental to be paid by the United States, there was very little difference between the Silva treaty plan and the agreement signed a year later by John Hay and Tomás Herrán under less fortunate circumstances.

The government of Bogotá was like a reed blown by the wind, however, so unsure of its roots that it dared not trust its envoy to make a treaty on his own discretion, and too timid to set forth any propositions of its own. Nominally a dictatorship, the regime of President Marroquín was a target for the attacks of hostile factions; on an issue so vital to Colombia as the Canal question, bristling with opportunities for domestic quarreling, it was loath to take a position. Such questions as the amount of compensation to be received, the terms of the grant or lease of a canal zone to the United States, the sovereignty of Colombia over the zone, embracing matters of taxation, justice, and police, and the defense of the zone by Colombian or American troops, were tempting objects of domestic controversy. Five months passed after the enactment of the Spooner Bill before the Colombian government would authorize its representative in Washington to come to terms. By that time the Nicaraguan opposition in the United States had again made itself vocal, the "reasonable time" limit specified in the Bill had been exhausted, they charged. Even Bogotá began to realize it must either agree to a treaty or resign itself to the consequences. How would the people of Panama receive the news, should the United States decide to abandon the Panama project and turn to Nicaragua? Insurrection shook the Isthmus during the summer months of 1902; what if a revolution should shake off Colombia and a new republic seek alliance with the United States? It was not hard for the vacillating Marroquín to conceive of such a possibility.

Herrán and Hay finally signed a treaty in January 1903, after Hay had delivered a written ultimatum requiring the Colombian's signature on pain of suffering the negotiations to be broken off permanently. The treaty granted the United States a zone ten kilo-

meters wide across the Isthmus, for which an indemnity of ten million dollars was to be paid upon ratification and an annuity of two hundred and fifty thousand dollars beginning nine years thereafter. The latter figure was equivalent to the rental paid by the Panama Railroad, the proprietary rights over which were to pass to the United States. In addition, the United States "freely acknowledges and recognizes" the sovereignty of Colombia over the zone; the republic was to have the right to maintain tribunals for the benefit of its own nationals in the zone and was to co-operate with the United States in making and enforcing police regulations. Furthermore, in case of the need for troops within the zone, Colombia was to fill the need, if she chose, or to fall back upon the United States. Only "under exceptional circumstances" might the United States intervene without Colombian consent. The American Senate approved the treaty two months after signature.

The Colombians were ill satisfied, however. Only three days after he signed the treaty, Herrán received a new order from Bogotá canceling his power to negotiate and putting him off indefinitely. The unhappy Marroquin simply could not resolve to run the risk of closing a deal. When the signed document reached the Colombian capital, however, the president decided to accept it pending reference to his Congress. When that body convened in June, he surrendered it to the treacherous winds of factional politics. Ill-prepared to face realities, the Colombians found many reasons for complaint. The guaranty of sovereignty was idle, they protested, because the Colombian government could not levy taxes within the zone; the concession should be limited to ninety-nine years, subject to renewal only if Colombia wished it; and the amount of the indemnity should be doubled and the annual rental raised to six hundred thousand dollars. Colombia was thinking in terms of the past; she was accustomed to dealing with private concessionaires, and therefore to keeping the political control in her own hands. Occasional American armed intervention had occurred in previous years under the treaty of 1846, but only for the sake of keeping the transit route open and never with any general political supervision in view. The Hay-Herrán treaty went much farther than this. Finally, the New Panama Company, which had once welcomed Colombia's support in its struggle to get its route accepted by the United States, jilted the republic and refused to share a penny of its indemnity money. Angered by the endless circumlocution at Bogotá, John Hay took up the company's quarrel by charging the Colombian government with breach of faith for even raising the issue with the Company

This acted like cement on the opposition at Bogotá; after five months of debate the Colombian Congress rejected the treaty, and the whole question was again subjected to the tender mercies of chance.

These were not slow in taking form. The imbroglío at Bogotá was no surprise, in fact; the people of Panama had well-known secessionist tendencies, and by July 1903 forecasts of a revolution were being freely made. A self-constituted *junta*, led by a former governor of the province, the editor of a Panama newspaper, and officials of the railroad, began with private meetings in Panama City. By August the Colombian rejection of the treaty was a virtual certainty, and the *junta* had two of its members on the way to New York in search of funds. William Nelson Cromwell was already alert to the situation, equipped with "copy" for publication in favor of the treaty and predicting revolution if it failed. The following month the ubiquitous Bunau-Varilla was back in New York, fresh with ideas for the Panamanian emissaries and prepared to see them through financially. A loan of one hundred thousand dollars, secured by his personal collateral, was speedily forthcoming from Brussels and Paris; the Panamanians on their part pledged themselves to appoint him their first minister to the United States. This was to be a bloodless revolution, since the insurgents had only about three hundred firemen and police from Panama City at their disposal. The governor, who was secretly favorable to their cause, was to be placed under nominal arrest and an independence proclamation was to be read from the Plaza in Panama City. If Colombian troops appeared at Colón to suppress the revolution, United States naval vessels were to be in the harbor to forbid them a landing.

On its part the Roosevelt administration kept itself informed of the situation on the Isthmus. Roosevelt knew in August that the Colombian treaty was doomed, and his first impulse was to go ahead with the canal and ignore Colombia. John Bassett Moore, a distinguished professor of international law and a former assistant Secretary of State, supplied him with the essential arguments. As a Secretary of State a half-century before had remarked, Colombia should not be permitted "in a spirit of Eastern isolation" to close the gates of intercourse on a great highway of the world. Dr. Moore was none too faithful to the facts: of fifty-three recorded cases of organized disturbance on the entire Isthmus since 1846, American troops had been called in only six times; the rest had been handled by local forces. But he reached the conclusion, nevertheless, that Colombia's guaranty was worthless and that from the beginning she had been the real beneficiary of American protection. Therefore

she could not withhold her consent if the United States chose to build a canal. "Elaborate stipulations as to the future are at least superfluous. . . . Once on the ground and duly installed, this Government would find no difficulty in meeting questions as they arose."⁸ In Theodore Roosevelt's personal letters to John Hay Dr Moore's dignified phrases gave way to tart references to "cat-rabbits," "homicidal corruptionists" of Bogotá, and similar expressions of impatience.

The President discarded the suggestions of Dr Moore, however, inasmuch as he was apprised of Bunau-Varilla's plans for a revolution. The Frenchman kept the administration minutely informed of the time table of the insurrection, and reached the conclusion (without being told in so many words) that American gunboats would be on hand to "maintain the freedom of the transit." His deductions were correct. The gunboat "Nashville" appeared in the harbor of Colón on November 2. A ruse invented by the quick-thinking superintendent of the Panama Railroad separated the officers of a small Colombian force from their men while the revolution was being organized at the other end of the line in Panama City. The revolution went off on schedule the next day, and the commander of the "Nashville," in accordance with his orders, insisted that the Colombian soldiers be immobilized in Colón. Thus protected, the leaders of the *junta* converted themselves into a provisional government in Panama, and on November 6 the Department of State at Washington recognized the independence of the Panama Republic.

Not to be outdone, Bunau-Varilla, who had remained in Washington, proceeded with record speed to negotiate a Canal Convention with John Hay. Since he held the purse strings of the revolution, the Panamanians could not deny him the privilege of negotiating the treaty for them, though they hoped to have delegates of their own choice in Washington to overshadow him. But once more the man to whose cleverness Roosevelt, Hay, and Moore alike paid tribute kept the cards in his hand. November 18, one day before the Panama delegates put in an appearance in Washington, he and Hay signed a treaty very like the abortive Hay-Herrán pact except that the width of the Canal Zone was declared to be ten miles instead of ten kilometers. The American Senate approved the pact the following February and the Republic of Panama shortly thereafter. The taking of the Canal Zone was now a fully accomplished fact.

So was the deep sense of grievance nursed by Colombia. The

⁸ Moore's memorandum is printed in full in the Appendix to Miles P. DuVal, *Cadiz to Cathay* (Stanford University, 1940), pp. 508-13.

wound began to heal in 1914 when the Wilson administration consented to a treaty whereby the United States offered its "sincere regret" for what had happened, and a money indemnity of twenty-five million dollars. Mortified by what he considered a personal affront by a Democratic administration, however, Colonel Roosevelt jumped from retirement to attack this "blackmail" treaty. The influence of his friends in the Senate blocked the treaty. Two years later the Wilson administration, greatly disturbed by reports of German influence in Colombia, considered pushing the treaty once more, but for reasons best known to itself it allowed the matter to die for lack of attention. Colombia was not to be left permanently without succor, however. By 1921 it was known that she had valuable petroleum concessions to bestow; British and other European interests were casting glances in her direction, and the American Senate finally approved a treaty conferring the full indemnity, though without the expression of regret.

EXPANSION IN EASTERN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

AS POINTED OUT in the Introduction and elsewhere, the thrust into the Pacific is not to be viewed as an isolated segment of American expansionism; it is a correlative and integral part of the whole. Whalers, traders, naval captains, and missionaries comprised the vanguard of a movement which got under way before the end of the eighteenth century. The China trade was the chief goal, and the hunt for commodities suitable to the Chinese taste carried the Yankee traders to the islands of the South Pacific as well as to Hawaii and the Pacific Northwest. Contacts were established with the Marquesas, the Fijis, the Carolines, the Friendly Islands, the Admiralty Islands, and Tahiti. Captain David Porter, venturing into the Pacific in search of British prizes during the War of 1812, was the first American naval officer to view the ocean as a whole and to advocate a systematic program of exploration, and perhaps territorial acquisition. Captain Porter occupied and temporarily annexed an island in the Marquesas group in 1813, and he anticipated Perry in a plea that the United States extend itself as far as Japan. A Pacific squadron of the Navy operated off the west coast of South America and among the islands of the southeastern Pacific after 1821, and intercourse with China and the East Indies reached the point by 1835 where it justified the establishment of a separate East India squadron to hunt down pirates.

The principal attractions of the Pacific were the exchange of goods and the saving of souls. A combination of these motives led to the planting of a strong frontier of permanent settlement in Hawaii, whence an additional thrust was made into Samoa in 1872. Furthermore, along with this widespread activity went calculations of the balance of power in relation to Europe. We have already examined the strategic implications of the American relationship to Hawaii. The position of this outpost required that it be neutralized against European influence and eventually annexed. Japan was looked upon as a spearhead of American influence in the Northwest Pacific,

and in China the events of the mid-century gave birth to the conception that the independence and integrity of that country were of vital concern to the United States

The leading illustrations of American expansion in this area are (1) The Opening of China, (2) The Opening of Japan; (3) Hawaii, 1840-1898; (4) Samoa, 1872-1880

CHAPTER 42

THE OPENING OF CHINA

THE CHINA TRADE is among the oldest American commercial ventures commenced independently of Great Britain. It dates from the year 1784, and developed as a unit in a growing commerce with Asia and the East Indies. Begun with the hope of finding occupation for idle ships suffering from the slump in trade after the Revolution, it soon succeeded as one of the most prosperous, competitive, and exciting enterprises carried on by Yankees in the early part of the nineteenth century. American merchants or their representatives early joined the foreign community resident at Macau and Canton, the only two points in the Chinese Empire where intercourse was permitted, and developed bonds of friendship and interest with fellow traders from other nations that stamped the settlement as international. However stormy might be the relations between Great Britain and the United States, for instance, they cast no serious blight upon the feeling of mutual interest that drew the two nationalities together in China. All foreigners were on a common footing before the Chinese and had the same experiences in living and doing business. They all dealt with the Co-Hong, the close monopoly of Chinese merchants which alone possessed the right to trade with the outside world; they all paid "sing-songs" (bribes) as a matter of course to the Hoppo, or Chinese customs officer; they all indulged in smuggling on the side as much as possible; and they all suffered the same restrictions upon their residence and freedom of movement at the hands of the Chinese.

Business was done at the Portuguese colony of Macau, on the peninsula at the mouth of the Pearl River, the only place where the families of foreign residents were permitted to stay, at the Whampoa

anchorage, twelve miles below Canton, the scene also of most of the smuggling, or at the Canton factories or hongs located outside of the walled city. Likewise all the foreign merchants faced a problem in exchange with the Chinese. The early American adventurers tried, with moderate success, to sell the medicinal root, ginseng, but had to supplement it with a miscellaneous cargo, including particularly kegs or boxes of Spanish dollars. In a country with a cold climate but without the means of clothing itself warmly, the British had a market for their woollens; but they too had to include specie in their cargoes as a means of making up the difference for the value of the silks, teas, and nankeens which formed the principal attractions of the trade. Beginning shortly after 1790, the Americans chiefly solved their exchange difficulties with sealskins acquired from the Falkland Islands, sea-otter pelts bought from the Indians of the Pacific Northwest, and sandalwood, for which they traded in Hawaii, Fiji, and other islands of the Pacific.

Thus the China trade furnished a goal for a voyage, lasting never less than a year and a half, from Boston or any other Atlantic port around the Horn and to a score of different ports of call in the Pacific. Or a Yankee ship might follow the route of the "Empress of China," the first American ship to reach Canton, go by way of the Cape of Good Hope, Bombay, or Calcutta, and finally sail through the Straits of Sunda or of Malacca. In this case it was likely to carry a cargo of Turkish opium, picked up at Smyrna after a side trip into the Mediterranean, or, somewhat later, a consignment of Bengal opium, put on board at Calcutta. In either case the opium had to be smuggled into China, because it was illegal after 1800; but there were no particular difficulties about that. Small boats dropping down below the Whampoa anchorage relieved the incoming ships of their opium cases. Most of the trade in opium was conducted by the British, it is true, like the pelts from the Northwest, the drug was a valuable aid in meeting the exchange problem because it "took" with the Chinese. But it seems unwise to draw a moral distinction between the Americans and the British, or any other Western trading nationality in contact with China. American ships eastbound through the Indian Ocean shared the business perhaps roughly in proportion to the volume of the total traffic, and American missionaries, whose denunciations ultimately aroused popular sentiment on the subject, sometimes traveled on the same ships with consignments of opium.¹

¹ The trade statistics for the years 1817 and 1818 showed that Turkish opium accounted for 20-30 per cent of the value of the goods, other than specie imported by Americans into China in those years. The figures for 1818 were. Total American

They probably could not avoid doing so, if they wished to reach their destination. Of the opium traffic from Smyrna in 1823, the American share consisted of 1,651 cases, a figure which, however, is hardly representative because of the continuous smuggling that went on. After the year 1820 the fur trade with the Pacific Northwest declined, and the American shippers thereafter depended to an increasing extent on opium to meet the exchange. Again in 1839, when the Chinese suddenly confiscated twenty thousand chests of the drug at Canton, 1,540 were taken from American vessels. Despite this spectacular seizure, the opium business was resumed almost immediately.

This did not mean, however, that the China trade was lacking in diversity or ingenuity. As time went on, Americans and British succeeded more and more in introducing manufactures to the trade. Cotton piece goods, some from New England mills and some picked up at Liverpool on the way, furnished an increasing percentage of China-bound cargoes, despite the export of nankeens from the Orient. Purchases in Canton were financed through bills of exchange drawn on London, and American ships did a lively re-export business in tea, the markets ranging from Brazil to Russia and the German North Sea ports. In the early stages almost every American seaport town had a stake in the China trade. But the smaller New England communities and the larger seaports from Philadelphia south were soon displaced by Boston, Salem, and New York. By 1825 four firms controlled practically all of the trade, and conducted it through resident commission agents in Canton. T. H. Perkins & Company of Boston had half the business in 1829. Until that year their resident agent in China was John P. Cushing, third cousin of the man who was to be the first American envoy to that country. John Cushing started in Canton at the age of sixteen, and in the last ten years before his departure he was accepted as the most influential of all the foreign merchants.

In China, as we have implied, the American community shared the common lot of other foreigners in being left to its own devices in dealing with the Chinese. Western governments had no relations with the Celestial Empire, which officially regarded all outsiders as barbarians and refused to treat with them on terms of equality. So long as the British East India Company held its monopoly over British trade with the Orient, the private system of dealing with the

imports \$9,867,208; specie \$7,369,000; opium \$546,339. C. C. Stelle, "American Trade in Opium to China, Prior to 1820," *Pacific Historical Review*, IX (1940), 425-44.

Co-Hong functioned smoothly. But when in 1834 Parliament removed the Company's monopoly and opened the trade to competing British firms, the government sent a Crown representative to look after British interests. Accustomed to the status quo, the British residents in Canton at first distrusted the new order—they were disturbed by prospects of a controversy with the Chinese over issues of equality. Merchants might feel no humiliation in humbly petitioning the Chinese provincial governor for redress through the medium of the Co-Hong; but the Crown representative could hardly do the same. It was this change in the British status at Canton that eventually led to hostilities with the Chinese in 1839.

Realizing they shared the common fate, the American community petitioned for a consul and a naval squadron at the time of the change in the British system. They held that concerted action with Great Britain, France, and Holland, including a joint naval demonstration off the coast of China, would bring the concessions they wanted without recourse of bloodshed. The basic concessions agreed upon as desirable by the foreign community included the following. (1) the opening of China to regular diplomatic intercourse with the Western powers on the principle of equality; (2) a fixed tariff, in place of the whimsical power customarily wielded by the Hoppo, (3) the opening of other Chinese ports to trade; and (4) a guaranty that Chinese penalties for crimes committed by foreigners would not be greater than the penalties for similar offenses under British and American law. Hostilities were precipitated over the Chinese seizure of the opium chests. The immediate quarrel was with Great Britain; but the foreign community shared the British view, and the American and other national groups wanted to be sure of keeping up with the British in the changes they all anticipated.

Substantially the same anxiety developed among the American merchants at home, though they were conservative when it came to advocating concerted naval action with the British. A succession of memorials to Congress to support American interests failed to make the desired impression; but when the news reached Washington late in 1842 that the British had successfully terminated the war with a treaty signed at Nanking, the administration decided on sending a mission. Popular sentiment was virulently antagonistic to the British, and had been educated by the missionaries to believe that opium was the issue; and there were too many other points of friction between the two countries to allow room for confidence in the United States that the British would be willing to respect American commercial rights in China. John Quincy Adams, active now as a member of

the House of Representatives and keenly following the official reports from China, saw the fallacy in the popular prejudice and put the responsibility for the war squarely on China. He declared:

The cause of the war is the *kotow*¹ [ceremony of prostration before the Emperor]—the arrogant and insupportable pretensions of China, that she will hold commercial intercourse with the rest of mankind, not upon terms of equal reciprocity, but upon the insulting and degrading forms of relation between lord and vassal.²

The assertion was pertinent, if extreme, but it stirred up only opposition. The editor of the *North American Review*, one of the important monthlies, declined to accept Adams' lecture as an article for publication.

Meanwhile the American government had only one precedent upon which to draw for information in sending a diplomatic mission to Asia. The Jackson administration had sent an Edmund Roberts in 1832 with instructions to negotiate whatever commercial treaties he could with Asiatic potentates, *with the exception of the Chinese Emperor*. At that time American merchants at Canton were satisfied with conditions as they were. Roberts, who already had connections in the Far East, corresponded with an experienced English missionary stationed in Canton and was warned to avoid all appearances of kowtowing when he approached Oriental potentates.³ He got two treaties, one with Siam and one with Muscat; but death cut off what appeared to be the chief object of his mission—a negotiation with the Japanese. Now for this second mission, to be limited to China, the government picked Caleb Cushing, a member of the House of Representatives whose interest in the situation at Canton had put him in the forefront of those who had been appealing for action. The merchants also were circularized for information. Only one firm thought the opium problem important, and they advised the administration to hold its tongue on the subject, and it was generally agreed that the mission should be accompanied by a respectable fleet, that any suggestion of offering tribute should be avoided, and that the United States should confine itself to getting the privileges already extracted by the British.

As a matter of fact, these concessions were already granted before Caleb Cushing was halfway on his voyage. The Chinese made it a point to write into their text of the Treaty of Nanking a safe-

² Quoted in Dennett, *Americans in Eastern Asia* (New York, 1922), p. 107.

³ John Quincy Adams appears to have got his ideas chiefly from a reading of the records of the Roberts mission.

guarding clause permitting merchants of the various nations of Europe to trade in the same ports as the British, and the American consular agent in Canton made the announcement for his own countrymen in September 1843. There were five treaty ports now open to all the merchants on the same terms: Canton, Ningpo, Amoy, Foochow, and Shanghai. By keeping all the foreigners on the same footing the Chinese thought to dilute the amount of dictation they would have to take from any one foreign power. The British adopted the Chinese view without protest, however, and wrote the principle into an agreement which supplemented the treaty of peace. Meanwhile Commodore Kearny of the American East India squadron had already been looking after American interests, and when Cushing arrived at Macau in February 1844, after a long voyage of 208 days, there seemed nothing for him to do. The merchants had all they wanted. There was, however, a distinct advantage in negotiating a formal treaty independently of the British, and Cushing cleverly overcame the reluctance of the Chinese by threatening to take the squadron and go on to Peking. This was a sanctuary which the Chinese were determined to keep at all costs free of alien contamination, and the Emperor's delegate, Kiyong, yielded to Cushing's stratagem. The American envoy had no intention of making war on China. Having successfully shunned all contact with Cushing for three months, Kiyong came to Macau, and in the small village of Wanghia on the outskirts of the Portuguese colony the two negotiated their treaty.

Cushing's treaty showed a draftsmanship so markedly superior to the British document that it superseded the latter as a model for Occidental relations with China. Aside from the general similarity of the two instruments, moreover, it possessed a number of outstanding differences. Best remembered is the formal statement of the principle of extraterritoriality, by which

Subjects of China who may be guilty of any criminal act towards citizens of the United States, shall be arrested and punished by the Chinese authorities according to the laws of China: and citizens of the United States, who may commit any crime in China, shall be subject to be tried and punished only by the Consul, or other public functionary of the United States, thereto authorized according to the laws of the United States. And in order to the prevention of all controversy and disaffection, justice shall be equitably and impartially administered on both sides.⁴

⁴ Miller, *Treaties*, IV, 566. The Treaty of Nanking imposed indemnities on the Chinese and required the cession of Hong Kong, gains of course that the Americans did not share.

Then there were three other prominent differences, which however, shaded into virtual identity when it came to practice

1. The American treaty left the duty of collecting the customs solely to the Chinese, whereas the British treaty made the responsibility joint between the Chinese authorities and the British consuls. The British abandoned their own method in favor of the American, but the Chinese customs service proved itself notoriously incompetent. It was unable to control the smuggling, and in the ensuing decade it collapsed. The great Taiping Rebellion shook the Empire to its foundations during the 1850's, and when the rebels captured Shanghai in 1854 the American and British consuls assumed the function of collecting the duties on imports from their respective nationals at that port. This was the beginning of a unique system which ultimately flowered into the Chinese Maritime Customs Inspectorate—a Board of Inspectors consisting of foreigners and originally appointed by the foreign consuls, but operating as a branch of the Chinese government. The American commissioner at the time, Mr. Humphrey Marshall, was particularly bent on seeing the customs collected and held in trust for the Imperial government. "The highest interests of the United States," he declared, "are involved in sustaining China. . . . rather than to see China become the theatre of widespread anarchy, and ultimately the prey of European ambition." Here was the first expression of the idea that the independence and integrity of China are vital to the security of the United States. All the American representatives who were contemporaries of Marshall agreed that the Customs Inspectorate was the only solution and that it should be adopted at the other treaty ports. This was accomplished when the treaties were revised and rewritten at Tientsin in 1858.

2. Americans as well as British were to have rights of residence in the treaty ports, which included the right to select sites for buildings. But Cushing's treaty was silent on the method of acquiring sites, whereas the British document was explicit in giving the consul the power of selection in each treaty port in conjunction with the local officials. The point proved important when it came to establishing residence rights at Shanghai, whose commercial possibilities were soon recognized after the Treaty of Nanking. The British consul made the first arrangement for British subjects, and the American consul soon followed suit. It was through the co-operation of these two officials that the International Settlement of Shanghai, the largest foreign community on Chinese soil, was started.

3. The Cushing Treaty also differed from the British in that it singled out opium as a forbidden article of commerce. Apparently Cushing had a strong personal feeling on this subject, in contrast to most of the American merchants. His own relative had once participated in the opium trade but had abandoned it seven years before leaving China. This part of his treaty, however, remained a dead letter, as the United States took no steps through its naval forces to check the smuggling in which Americans continued to participate. At Tientsin the hopeless method of prohibiting the traffic and then leaving the enforcement of the prohibition to the weak Chinese service was abandoned in favor of a stipulation legalizing the trade but subjecting it to high duties.

Indifference on the part of the United States to problems of enforcement was even more marked in the matter of extraterritoriality. Merely rewarded, and unprovided with an allowance with which to lease or build jails, American consuls at the treaty ports were obliged either to ask their British and French colleagues for free cell space or to turn their prisoners loose. When the British and French jails were full—a by no means infrequent occurrence—the news spread and

every vagabond Englishman, Irishman, or Scotchman, any one who, speaking our language, can make out a *prima facie* claim to citizenship, commits crime according to his inclination, secure that if he is tried in the American courts there is no power of punishment.⁵

The tendency on the part of the Americans and British to co-operate in practical matters showed itself also in matters of higher policy. The Cushing Treaty had definitely stipulated a revision of the agreement at the end of twelve years, a concession which under the most-favored-nation system belonged equally to the other treaty powers. Refusal of the Chinese in 1856 to consider revision of the treaties precipitated the second China war, with the British and French leagued together actively and the Americans co-operating to the end that they would benefit from the additional privileges expected but not sharing the burdens of the war. As in 1842, the American community in Canton was for armed action; and when the Chinese accidentally fired on the American squadron in the river and got a reply in kind, the reaction was enthusiastic. By 1857 indications of active American co-operation had become so promising

⁵ This and the preceding quotation from Humphrey Marshall are cited in Dennett, *op. cit.*, pp. 215 and 320. William B. Reed, Buchanan's envoy to China in 1858, was the author of the quoted opinion on the evils of extraterritoriality.

that the British foreign secretary made a formal proposal to the administration in Washington to negotiate a three-power alliance. Dr. Peter Parker, a former missionary and the American government's commissioner to China two years before this, had actually proposed as much himself to the British government. Like Humphrey Marshall, Parker was convinced the United States was destined to play a decisive role in the affairs of China; and he and the American commodore felt that the United States should occupy and keep the island of Formosa as an offset to Hong Kong.

But American policy was not fated to be so frank as this. With a politician's gift for facing two ways, President Buchanan sent William B. Reed, a personal friend, to the Orient with instructions to inform the Chinese that in American opinion the British and French objects were "just and expedient," but to bear in mind that the United States was not at war with China. Buchanan, of course, was well informed on the vital issues—the establishment of the right of diplomatic residence at Peking, the opening of additional ports to trade, the opening of the Yangtze Valley (an advantage the Americans were particularly keen to have), and the right of access for foreign individuals to the interior of China generally. Then there was the opium problem—whether to continue the futile prohibition of the trade or to legalize it and attempt by means of heavy duties to control it. In either event the United States was to assume no responsibility. The President no doubt concluded that silence was golden; whatever chestnuts the British and French pulled from the fire the Americans would get as a matter of course, but they would escape the moral stigma of the method. Reed was blandly to tell the Chinese that the United States sought "only the enlargement of opportunities for trade," and that it desired "neither territory nor to interfere in China's domestic affairs." The sentiment gratified the American thirst for virtue; but it was hardly in touch with realities. The whole onslaught against China, military and diplomatic, was to the Chinese an aggressive interference with their domestic affairs.

Reed had an unheroic part to play, but succeeded fairly well in keeping his dignity. Native intelligence supplied the omission in formal diplomatic training, and he managed to maintain friendly relations with his three colleagues, the British, French, and Russian envoys. Russia had the same unspoken purpose in mind as the United States—to reap the advantages of the war without paying the price—and the American and Russian envoys paired off together in traveling ahead of the British and French from Hong Kong to Tientsin.

The outcome of their mission, however, hinged on the military success of the other two nations, and this was speedily achieved. Lord Elgin, the British envoy, overshadowed the other foreign representatives, and British naval power, with some help from the French, put on an exhibition intended to confirm its claim to priority in the Orient. This in fact was Elgin's objective to claim the leadership of the Western nations in China, while permitting the others to share in the fruits. British opinion was so self-confident that it was indifferent to the expediency of making the other nations share either the material or the moral costs.

The Treaties of Tientsin realized the general objectives: six new ports were opened to trade and residence and four additional ports on the Yangtze River were to be opened subsequently. The principal purpose in going to Tientsin, however, was to force entry into the capital and establish direct diplomatic access to the Emperor. The British and French treaties were explicit on this issue, but the American was not. To the Chinese the nub of the matter was to keep the foreign barbarians out of Peking at any cost; and they continued to find excuses for refusing entry while rebuilding and strengthening the Taku forts at the mouth of the Peiho River. The issue was squared in 1859 when the Anglo-French forces attempted to pass the forts and sail directly up the stream to the capital. They met with unexpected resistance, and when the British admiral was dangerously wounded and his squadron in peril of defeat the American Commodore Tatnall, with the approval of the American minister, went to his aid. Tatnall is supposed to have exclaimed, "Blood is thicker than water!" However that may be, the Chinese forts were destroyed, the Anglo-French fleets reached their goal in the capital, the Emperor's magnificent summer palace was burned as a lesson, and a new set of treaties concluded at Peking in 1860 left no room for doubt that the Chinese Empire must henceforth meet the Western powers on their own terms.

Needless to say, except for the heavy indemnities laid on the Chinese by the British and the French as an additional penalty for the war, the United States was the willing beneficiary of the Allied aggression. The treaties of Tientsin and Peking replaced the earlier instruments as the permanent base for Western relations with the Celestial Empire; and the United States proceeded to enjoy, in common with the other powers, the right of maintaining a diplomatic post at the court of Peking. The feat was accomplished under an expansionist and competitive impulse, thoroughly supported by the mercantile community. It was premature for American foreign

policy to react to the views of Humphrey Marshall and Dr. Peter Parker that aid in maintaining the territorial integrity and political independence of China was vital to the United States. That was a concept to be engrafted later.⁹

CHAPTER 43

THE OPENING OF JAPAN

THE INCENTIVE to open intercourse with the Japanese—a people who jealously secluded themselves from the outside world until the pressure of events forced them to reconsider—stemmed from a growing appreciation of the value of the Pacific Ocean and from a conviction that American destinies were pointed across its wide surface. Japan was conceived of as a link in the Pacific, but by far the most important link. Recalling the exploits of Cook, Anson, and Vancouver for England and of La Pérouse for France, Captain David Porter in 1815 urged that the time had come for the United States to put forth similar efforts. Such voyages were essential to national greatness. He declared:

We border on Russia, on Japan, on China; and our trade is now of sufficient importance there to attract the attention and excite the cupidity of an enemy. We border on islands which bear the same relation to the N. W. Coast as those of the West Indies bear to the Atlantic States. . . . The important trade of Japan has been shut to every nation except the Dutch, who by the most abject and servile means secured a monopoly. Other nations have made repeated attempts at an intercourse with that country, but from a jealousy in the government and from other causes, (among which may be named a want of manly dignity on the part of the negociators) they have all failed. Great changes have since taken place in the world—changes which may have effected [*sic*] even Japan. The time may be favorable, and it would be a glory beyond that acquired by any other nation for us, a nation of only 40 years standing, to beat down their rooted prejudices, secure to ourselves a valuable trade, and make that people known to the world.¹

⁹ The reader is reminded of chapter 24, above (pp. 323-66).

¹ Porter's letter is edited by Allen B. Cole in the *Pacific Historical Review*, IX, (1940), 63-65

Porter was a naval officer who drew on his firsthand experiences in the Pacific during the War of 1812. Whaling boats from New England had already penetrated as far as Japan. The captain's personal plea to the President of the United States went unanswered, but the idea was recurrent. When the Roberts mission was devised in 1832 with the object of opening relations with various potentates in Asia and the East Indies, Japan was the ultimate goal. Inter-course with her was a step toward trade with North China and Korea. Caleb Cushing, having reached Macau, developed the same conception and wanted authority to go on to Japan after he had concluded his mission in China. The Tyler administration complied with Cushing's wishes, but without the conviction that he would be successful. As a matter of fact, Cushing was on his way back home before the necessary permission arrived in Macau. Commodore Biddle made the first actual contact with the Japanese in 1846; but the experience was not a good beginning. A desire to be courteous made the commodore too polite: he was personally given a push by a Japanese soldier that knocked him over, and verbal apologies seem to have been given too facilely. At any rate, Biddle was ordered out of the harbor.

Meanwhile the opening of the treaty ports in China had had its effect. The foreign community in Shanghai was established; and with steam navigation showing an excellent prospect of success, men began to think of a transpacific steamship line. It was thus to be forehanded that Daniel Webster determined on another expedition to Nippon. Access to Japanese harbors was a prerequisite to success in establishing "the last link in that great chain, which unites all the world, by the early establishment of a line of Steamers from California to China." The Japanese were believed to have coal, and a local supply near the western end of the line would be advantageous. Furthermore, there was no reason why Japan herself could not be made a good market. China was already buying American cotton goods, and a New York merchant, Mr. A. H. Palmer, convinced the Department of State that the same could be true of the Nipponese. Then there were the Yankee whalers whose welfare needed looking after. The uncharted waters of Japan were a graveyard for ships; and even a vessel that avoided the rocks needed a friendly harbor to which it might go for fresh food and water. In other words, Japan had become too important to American enterprise to be overlooked any longer.

Past experience and knowledge of the grievances nursed by the Japanese toward the West showed that a determined effort to pry

them loose from their seclusion would have its risks. For over two hundred years the Japanese had made an exception only of the Dutch, and these they permitted to maintain a trading post on a small, artificial island in the harbor of Nagasaki. Since quarrels with Christian missionaries had been the original cause for expelling the foreigners, the Dutch kept their foothold only by scrupulously refraining from teaching the faith. For this devotion to Mammon at the expense of Christ they got black looks from their fellow Christians of other nations, though possibly the feeling was not wholly divorced from envy at the Dutch commercial success. Actually the Netherlands authorities were as alert as anyone to the practical wisdom of Japan's changing her ways. The King of the Netherlands addressed a solemn warning to the Emperor of Japan in 1844 "against the increasing dangers of the system of isolation," but he got only the customary rebuff. And when the Dutch became aware toward the end of the decade that the United States would probably be the power to take the initiative with Japan, they volunteered to support the scheme and furnished the American government with considerable information. In their own words, they did not wish to be left behind in a race they felt sure the United States would begin; and through the governor-general of the Netherlands Indies orders were sent to the post superintendent at Nagasaki to co-operate with the Americans whenever the latter should arrive.

Daniel Webster hoped that a display of naval power would exercise the proper influence on the Japanese, especially since the United States expedition was to make a point of returning to their native land a number of shipwrecked Japanese seamen picked up at sea. The commander was to have no authority to make threats if the Japanese officials should prove unresponsive, however; so the expedition ran the chance of failure. But Commodore Matthew C. Perry, the officer finally selected to head the expedition, had no intention of returning empty-handed; and when Webster was struck with a fatal illness President Fillmore gave Perry the unusual privilege of writing instructions to himself. Japan, the commodore admitted, had a right to withhold intercourse with other nations, but she had a duty nevertheless to succor shipwrecked sailors. If she persisted in treating such persons as "the most atrocious criminals," she "may justly be considered as the common enemy of mankind." Either she must be treated as a barbarian nation or she must be forced to respect the usages of civilized lands. Perry was to exhaust the means of persuasion with the Japanese government. He was to convince it of the wisdom of (1) promising to protect shipwrecked American seamen

in the future, (2) granting permission to American vessels to enter one or more ports in order to obtain supplies, and (3) opening one or more ports for general purposes of trade. It was also very desirable to secure a depot for coal, if not in Japan proper, at least on one of the neighboring uninhabited islands. Perry then proceeded

If, after having exhausted every argument and every means of persuasion, the Commodore should fail to obtain from the Government any relaxation of their system of exclusion, or even any assurance of humane treatment of our shipwrecked seamen, he will then change his tone and inform them in the most unequivocal terms that it is the determination of this Government to insist, that hereafter all citizens or vessels of the United States that may be wrecked on their coasts or driven by stress of weather into their harbors shall, so long as they are compelled to remain there, be treated with humanity, and that if any acts of cruelty should hereafter be practised upon citizens of this country whether by the Government or by the inhabitants of Japan they will be severely chastised.²

But Perry had a more important conception of his mission than to get protection for a few seamen, and he could make the phrases of Manifest Destiny ring. "The World has assigned this duty to us," he declared; "we have assumed the responsibility and undertaken the task, and can not now hold back, without drawing upon ourselves ridicule and reproach." The Japanese were "a singular people" who had an "impracticable government." He would have to pay them more than one visit in order to impress them, and he would need a larger force on his second visit. He would, of course, attack only as a last resort and in self-defense; and he seems to have had supreme confidence in his ability to discourage the Japanese from initiating a hostile move on their part; nevertheless, he was not blind to the chance and, as we shall see, he made the most efficient preparations for any emergency whenever he was in actual contact with the Nipponese.

Basic to the objectives of the Perry mission was the Commodore's keen appraisal of the strategy of the Pacific Ocean, and his conclusion that Japan was merely an incidental, if nevertheless important, part of the whole. By the time he had reached the Madeira Islands on the east-bound voyage he had fixed upon the Loo Choo Islands, which were strung out to the south of Japan, as the site for a rendezvous for the American fleet and an indispensable depot for American commerce. In opening the ports of China Britain had

² For this and other excerpts from the sources in this chapter, see the Notes in Miller, *Treaties*, VI, 493-666.

performed "one of the most humane and useful acts of that nation during the present Century"—she would do more for China than "ages of missionary labours" could otherwise accomplish. Nevertheless, she was "our great maritime rival," and she was

already in possession of the most important points in the East India and China Seas Singapore commanding the South Western while Hong Kong covers the Northeastern Entrance, with the Island of Labuan on the Eastern Coast of Borneo, an intermediate point, she will have the power of shutting up at will, and controlling, the enormous trade of those seas. . . .

Consequently the United States must lose no time in setting up its own places of refuge, and the port of Naha in the Loo Choos^a would serve this purpose well. Perry lost no time in forwarding his additional plans to Washington, and Edward Everett, the new Secretary of State, sent him his approval

With a small squadron of four ships Perry entered the Bay of Yedo (Tokyo) in July 1853. The Dutch had been expecting him at Nagasaki, and if one takes the instructions that he had written for himself at their face value, one will conclude that Nagasaki was his destination. But in reality he had no such intentions. Dutch friendship was "very doubtful." The Dutch had "lived in abject submission to the Japanese," and they would "throw obstacles and delays in the way of any favourable issue of my visit." This seems to have been harsh judgment of the Dutch. Their real intention was to assist because they believed the American move was helpful to their own interest. Perry had a suspicious nature, but in going direct to Yedo he was probably right—he could make more immediate contact with the proper authorities there than at Nagasaki. Japanese efforts to get him to depart proved unavailing. With the decks cleared for action, the guns shotted, and every sailor so situated during the entire length of the visit that he was never without protection from the guns, Perry coolly conducted surveys of the harbor in the face of native protests. He even took his flagship within seven miles of the capital, as far as he dared without stirring Japanese resentment to violence. The Japanese were cautioned to deliver his proposals to the Emperor, and were told that he would be back in the spring for their answer. The interval was spent in rendezvousing at Naha on Great Loo Choo Island, which Perry was now certain should be an American outpost or at least a free port of entry. Furthermore, a vessel was dispatched to the Bonin Islands,

^a The Japanese name for these islands is the Ryukyus.

seven hundred miles southeast of Yedo, and formal possession was taken of one of the southernmost of these islands in October. If the Japanese refused to negotiate a treaty, he reported to Washington, he would then occupy Great Loo Choo Island. If he did not take this step, he believed, either the Russians, the French, or the English would take it. But Franklin Pierce, the new President in Washington, was not prepared for such audacity, and word was sent to Perry that he would be overruled.

Meanwhile Perry had returned to the Bay of Yedo, and the Japanese, having observed the fate of China and having been advised by the Dutch to open relations peacefully, consented to negotiate a treaty. The Commodore wanted a treaty equal to that which Cushing had concluded in China. He had three treaty ports, including Naha, in mind for immediate access, to be followed by two more later. Actually he accepted much less, a mere shipwreck convention which coincided only with his original minimum intentions. Two minor ports, Shimoda (near Yedo) and Hakodate far in the north, were opened to American ships for supplies of wood and water, provisions, and coal. Otherwise no trading was to take place in them. The Japanese did not intend to open the door to foreign residents; hence they stipulated that provisions were to be got only from their own people. But a consul was to be appointed to reside at Shimoda provided "either of the two governments deem such arrangement necessary." Considering the breadth of Perry's ambitions, the distrust he felt for rival European powers, and the spirited way in which he had pursued his mission, this treaty of March 31, 1854, seems like a pale result of the elaborate planning and activity that had gone on for nearly two years. Evidently Perry took the caution against acting aggressively except in self-defense more seriously than he cared to admit, he regarded his treaty as an entering wedge, and comforted himself somewhat by retiring to Naha and there signing a compact with the native regency which opened that port too for supplies of water and provisions. This also fell short of the importance of a full treaty port, such as had been obtained in China from the Chinese.

Two years later, in the face of Japanese opposition the American government established its first consulate at Shimoda. The Perry treaty was virtually meaningless unless it was followed up. Experience showed that no supplies could be procured at either of the two Japanese ports from the Japanese themselves, the actual domiciling of Americans was a necessary step in servicing the ships, and the administration in Washington was made aware that the Japanese

intended to evade the treaty if they could. Townsend Harris, a New Yorker, volunteered for the post and in brilliance of achievement more than made up for the indifferent success he had formerly had as a merchant at various places in the Far East. For fourteen months Harris lived an isolated existence in Shimoda, receiving no mail from home and having his Dutch interpreter as his only companion. The Japanese, he thought, were "superior to any people east of the Cape of Good Hope"; but they were also "the greatest liars on earth," and Harris, like Perry, was annoyed by the swarms of spies and agents who watched his every move. In June 1857 he persuaded the Japanese to enter a convention opening the port of Nagasaki and giving to American citizens the right of permanent residence at Shimoda and Hakodate for the purpose of servicing the ships that entered the harbors. This was followed by a comprehensive treaty in July 1858 which authorized the residence of a diplomatic agent at Yedo and of consuls at six ports which were to be opened to trade and residence. The treaty contained the most-favored-nation clause and provided for extraterritoriality, an institution which Perry, disgusted with the failure of the system in China, had decided not to demand.

Thus the Harris Treaty was the full equivalent of Cushing's accomplishment in China. Harris thus conceived of Japan as a sort of ally against Great Britain or Russia, and went as far as he could toward binding the country to the United States. The United States was pledged to act as "friendly Mediator" in any disputes that might arise between Japan and any of the Western powers. Furthermore, the treaty explicitly guaranteed naval depots for the United States at Nagasaki, Kanagawa (near Yokohama), and Hakodate, which according to Harris were three of the best harbors in the country. Supplies might be landed and stored there for the use of the Navy free of duty. Harris reported:

When the salubrity of the climate, the safety of the Harbours, the vicinity to the great Ports of China, the facility of obtaining supplies, and the security against desertions of the crew are considered, it will be seen that Japan is the spot of all others, in which the Naval depots of the United States in Asia, should be established. It is hardly necessary for me, to refer to the political side of the question. In Japan we have nothing to fear from the hostility of the Government, politically or as a Commercial rival, while full and complete security is furnished for both person and property. Our present depot is placed in one of the worst spots [Hong Kong] in the whole East, as it regards insalubrity and the vile population, that exists there, to which may be added the important fact,

that the whole of the supplies for our Eastern squadron, are in the hands of our great political and commercial rival.⁴

But the Treaty was not so easily put into operation as one might suppose. Japan had a dual government—an Emperor surrounded by courtiers and living a secluded existence at Kyoto, and a Shogun who resided at Yedo and who held the feudal lords, or daimyos, in vassalage. Both Perry and Harris dealt with the Shogun; and while the latter had held the reins of power for more than two centuries, he yet felt obliged to win the approval of the Emperor. Neither the Emperor nor the great daimyos were alert to the dangers to which the country would be exposed if it persisted in following its haughty attitude toward the foreign powers. The daimyos, moreover, looked upon the flirtation of the Shogun with the foreigners as their golden opportunity for freeing themselves from his grip and restoring the ancient system of government under the Emperor. Lord Hotta, the Shogun's prime minister, mustered all the arguments he could find in favor of the treaties. "Either a war has to be fought, or amicable relations have to be established," he warned. Then he pleaded for the development of a Japanese manifest destiny. He declared

When our power and national standing have come to be recognized, we should take the lead in punishing the nation which may act contrary to the principle of international interests; and in so doing, we should join hands with the nations whose principles may be found identical with those of our country. . . . Our national prestige and position thus ensured, the nations of the world will come to look up to our Emperor as the Great Ruler of all the nations, and they will come to follow our policy and submit themselves to our judgment.⁵

The antiforeign feeling, combined with the loud murmurs against the Shogun, was too strong for these pleas, however. There followed a period of confusion and civil war. The Shogun sent an embassy to Washington to ratify the Harris Treaty, but the Emperor on his part declared the Treaty void and ordered the foreigners expelled. Japanese two-swordsmen in the service of the daimyos attacked and murdered various foreigners, including Harris' Dutch interpreter, who was an American citizen. The upshot of this violence was a joint four-power naval expedition undertaken at the instance of the British consul in August 1864 against the west coast of Japan, whence came the leadership in the antiforeign agitation. The Lincoln adminis-

⁴ Miller, *Treaties*, VII, 1070

⁵ Cited by Payson J. Treat, *Diplomatic Relations between the United States and Japan, 1853-1895* (2 vols., Stanford University, 1932), I, 66-67.

tration approved of the expedition but could furnish only one rented steamer, compared with nine British, four Dutch, and three French war vessels. The expedition accomplished its purpose: the western daimyos were properly impressed, and the Mikado ratified the treaties. The United States through Perry and Harris had assumed the lead in opening Japan to Western intercourse. The Netherlands, Russia, Great Britain, and France, in the order named, followed Harris in securing similar treaties from the Shogun. The American policy was to avoid the pattern of war applied to China; but in the showdown of 1864 the United States recognized its common interests with the other Western powers and acted accordingly.

The opening of Japan must be framed in the larger setting in which it had been conceived since the days of Captain Porter: Japan was a pivotal point in the North Pacific Ocean. She was a stepping-stone to North China and Korea. Korea too was a sealed kingdom, in whose subsequent opening American policy was aligned with Japan, the latter taking the initiative. In the ensuing forty years after 1864 the island empire informally performed a function well adjusted to American policy—it was a sort of a spearhead of American influence in the region of the North Pacific and a bulwark against Russia. But Japan showed she had an expansion program of her own to develop, and at the turn of the century she began to change over from a status of partner in the Far East to one of rival.⁶

CHAPTER 44

HAWAII, 1840-1898

FROM THE TIME of Captain Cook the crossroads of the Pacific were located at the Hawaiian Islands. English, French, Russian, and American ships rendezvoused there on their way to more distant destinations. Honolulu, itself founded by foreign settlers, was a port of call for vessels on both the out- and the inbound voyages. English ships from Canton and the Indies bound for the Northwest Coast, Russian adventurers out of Sitka, Boston men from around

⁶ The reversal in the position of Japan put American interests on the defensive. Consult chapter 23, above, pp. 366-91.

the Horn en route to the Columbia and thence again west across the ocean to China and from there east again for the home port, found the Islands a welcome haven. Thus on a single voyage a vessel ordinarily called there twice, while three calls were not unusual. Fresh water and supplies from there were indispensable for all ships. Natural-grown Hawaiian sandalwood proved a boon to the Boston men in the China trade so long as the limited supply lasted. Furs, too, were assembled there from Oregon and Alaska for transshipment to the China coast.

It was as the general emporium for the Pacific that Honolulu became one of the busiest communities of the ocean basin. It entered its most prosperous period after 1830, by which time the sandalwood and fur trade with China was on the decline. The town itself was built with lumber brought from Oregon by Hudson's Bay Company ships, which took in exchange Hawaiian salt, sugar, molasses, and coffee. Articles of manufacture from England, France, and the United States were assembled there for marketing in the settlements along the west coast of North and South America. San Francisco and Monterey, San Diego and Mazatlan, Lima and Valparaiso, all had regular calls from vessels out of the Islands. A triangular trade with California and Chile in general merchandise, hides, and flour played a leading part in Island economy until the middle of the century. After 1850, however, the position of Honolulu underwent a change. It began to lose its prominence as a mart for San Francisco. On the other hand, these were the golden years of American whaling. By 1850 the fleets were hunting their prey in distant Japanese waters. Twice a year they swarmed into Pearl Harbor, and the job of provisioning the whalers became the main activity of the Hawaiian merchants.

As the threads of commerce, so were the sources of colonization of the Islands. Sailor folk, tired of the sea and conscious of mercantile possibilities, were the first permanent white residents in Hawaii. British subjects direct from home and from the Columbia River region settled down there, as did a handful of Russians and an appreciable number of French. But from an early time the most influential element was the Yankee. Until 1820 Americans were not different from the other foreigners with respect to their interest in the Islands. In that year, however, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions established a mission in Hawaii, and not many years had passed before the influence of the New England missionaries became predominant. The polity which they succeeded in establishing on this cosmopolitan insular frontier and the attitude they

adopted toward foreign nations, including the land of their birth, mark Hawaii as a distinctive problem in American expansionism

Hawaii was in 1820 a native Polynesian kingdom, the tribes of the several islands having been welded together with unusual ability by Kamehameha I. The chiefs were made landowners and feudalized in such a way as to make them dependent on the monarchy. In spite of this achievement, however, there can be little doubt that it would not have lasted long against foreign encroachment except for the determined assistance of the missionaries. Even so, the native population steadily declined in the nineteenth century, until as early as 1840 even its sincerest friends felt that its days were definitely numbered. The object of the missionaries, however, was to maintain and build up a native Hawaiian nation, independent of foreign control and recognized by the great powers. Through Christianization and introduction of the practical arts of the Occident they hoped to rescue the natives from extinction. But foreigners had been associated with the chiefs and the king long before the advent of the missionaries. This condition the latter did not discourage, but rather they expected to foster it and insure the loyalty of foreigners to the land of their adoption. Thus the missionaries took the oath of allegiance to the king seriously, and intended it as an act of genuine naturalization.

Among the missionaries none was more sincere or determined than Dr. Gerritt P. Judd, who was sent out as physician by the American Board in 1827. Fifteen years later Dr. Judd left the mission altogether, becoming the king's most trusted adviser. The policy of independence of foreign governments and of fostering a cultural fusion between whites and Polynesians within the Islands was best exemplified by his work. After 1842 he was never separated from the administration until his death. Second perhaps to Dr. Judd in importance was Robert C. Wyllie, a Scot who came to Honolulu in 1845 in the company of the British consul. Wyllie was not there long before he was made Minister of Foreign Affairs. A third man who acquired quick distinction was William L. Lee, a young fellow-New Yorker of Dr. Judd. En route to Oregon, in 1846 Lee decided to remain in Hawaii and soon became head of the kingdom's judiciary. These three men especially were creators of the constitutional monarchy which flourished during the middle of the century. With skill they metamorphosed within the span of a few years the tribal kingdom of Kamehameha I into a governmental system constructed on Anglo-American principles. Under a written constitution, issued by the king in 1840, there was a national legislature composed of a

council of chiefs and a lower house elected by popular vote, and a supreme court. An American, John Ricord, introduced the principles of English jurisprudence, and in 1852 William Lee added a penal code. In addition, three organic acts of 1845-1847 created among other things, a privy council made up of five ministers of the king, four native governors, and other members to be appointed by the king. This body was henceforth the chief organ of government.

In spite of the idealism of the missionaries, native influence steadily declined. The Reverend Richard Armstrong in 1844 pointedly described this process as follows: Besides the chief officers of state, he wrote,

we have pilots, harbour masters, collector of imposts, sheriff & constables, all *naturalized* foreigners, who act in conjunction with the native authorities. But such is the native character, so deficient in point of intelligence, faithfulness & enterprise in business, that the more important affairs, indeed I may say *all* the important affairs of the government are now administered by these *adopted foreigners*. It must necessarily be so, seeing this nation is now shoved in among the great family of civilized nations & its foreign relations a good deal involved. The native chiefs are far from being competent to manage these complicated affairs & hence the aid of foreigners is called in ¹

The Hawaiian government, as thus made up of naturalized foreigners, was the first to raise the issue of its own international position. Desiring the full dignity of an independent sovereign state, it made a secret bid in 1838 for American recognition. But having failed to attract any notice whatever, it dispatched a diplomatic mission four years later to negotiate treaties of friendship and commerce with the United States, Great Britain, and France. The mission was only partially successful. The American government, after some hesitation, declared itself satisfied with the existing status of the Islands. It declined to negotiate a treaty but insisted that it had a special interest in their future. The United States, said Secretary of State Webster,

are more interested in the fate of the islands . . . than any other nation can be, and . . . no power ought either to take possession of the islands as a conquest, or for the purpose of colonization, and . . . no power ought to seek for any undue control over the existing Government, or any exclusive privileges or preferences in matters of commerce.²

This was not the equivalent of diplomatic recognition. Britain and

¹ Quoted from the Armstrong Letters by R. S. Kuykendall, *The Hawaiian Kingdom, 1778-1854* (Honolulu, 1938), p. 238.

² Miller, *Treaties*, V, 601-2; see also pp. 623-28.

France, on the other hand, went farther when in November 1843 they jointly declared that they

thought it right to engage reciprocally to consider the Sandwich Islands as an independent State, and never to take possession, either directly, or under the title of protectorate, or under any other form, of any part of the territory of which they are composed.^a

Within the next few years commercial treaties were effectuated with several foreign powers, including a very satisfactory agreement with the United States in 1849. Nevertheless, the kingdom's independent position was quite precarious. The presence of foreigners who refused naturalization and who yet insisted on full property rights was a source of danger. Thus a quarrel over alleged discriminatory treatment of British subjects in 1843 brought armed intervention by a British naval officer even while the Hawaiian mission was abroad seeking recognition. This intervention was not authorized by the British government; nevertheless it lasted five months. Furthermore, the commercial jealousies of the three powers whose interests were primary aroused apprehension. The principle laid down by the treaties was that of equal treatment, but the French insisted on special privileges for their wines and brandies. A quarrel over this issue in 1849 with the French consul brought a threat of intervention from the latter. Clearly the sovereignty of the native kingdom was contingent upon the willingness of the foreign powers to respect it.

In 1842 the Hawaiians had unsuccessfully suggested a plan whereby any dispute between them and one of the three foreign powers should be settled through the arbitration of the other two. The incident with the French consul in 1849 so undermined their confidence that they dispatched Dr. Judd to seek the protection of the United States or of Great Britain, or of both powers together. Neither one would give it, however, though they did remonstrate with France. Apparently this had its effect, for the immediate danger of interference disappeared. Could the Island government have secured a collective guaranty from all three powers, it might indeed have felt secure. A hint of such a proceeding came from President Fillmore in 1852, when the British and French were trying to persuade the American government to agree to a tripartite treaty guaranteeing the status quo in Cuba. The President told the British and French ministers he thought such a treaty might be extended to embrace Hawaii, and gave them to understand he would support such

^a 52d Cong. 2d Sess., *Senate Executive Documents*, No 57, p 13

a project in case he won in the election of that year. Since he was defeated, the question was not revived.

At this point American diplomacy underwent a change. The succeeding Democratic administration of Franklin Pierce was frankly expansionist, and concentrated on obtaining an empire which would include Samaná Bay in Santo Domingo, Cuba, control over the republics of Central America, and, lastly, the Hawaiian Islands. With respect to the latter it proceeded on the assumption that the islanders would desire annexation, and in April 1854 it armed its agent in Honolulu, David L. Gregg, with the necessary authority. Gregg's mission became involved in considerable intrigue. There was intense local dissatisfaction over the policies of Judd, and ill feeling between the latter and Wyllie. This created the appearance of anarchy, which was made worse by rumors of a filibustering attack. Filibustering indeed was hard to anticipate. What might at first appear to be a group of innocent strangers from San Francisco might turn out to be an organized band of armed men. Consequently, what Wyllie, Lee, and the crown prince, Alexander, desired was a promise of protection in case they should be attacked. Since filibustering was lawless, the United States could not well refuse its aid in such an event.

The British consul-general, Miller, intrigued against the American agent, suggesting a tripartite treaty in which all three powers would be obligated to defend the Islands against attack. But the real nature of the annexation project was revealed by the terms of the treaty to which Gregg finally agreed. This stipulated that the kingdom should be admitted to the Union as a state and that large annuities should be paid by the United States to the king, the crown prince, and other native personages. The apparent purpose of the Hawaiians in negotiating the treaty at all is revealed in a secret article which authorized the king to proclaim annexation to the United States at any time before ratifications were exchanged, in which case it would become the duty of the United States to defend them. Fear of filibustering seems to have been uppermost in the minds of the Island authorities.

The Gregg treaty stood no chance of acceptance in Washington because of its statehood provision. This the Hawaiians had apparently insisted upon for the very reason that they knew it would not be accepted. It made the American government appear ridiculous, especially in view of a formal protest made by Great Britain against the scheme. Marcy, the American Secretary of State, had implied to the British minister in Washington that he would favor annexa-

tion only if Hawaii should ask for it. He made the mistake of supposing, without sufficient investigation, that Hawaii was ripe for following the precedents of Texas and California.

The solution which the Hawaiians desired was a quadripartite treaty among themselves, Great Britain, France, and the United States guaranteeing their independence. William Lee came to Washington in July 1855 for this purpose, but he had ill success. While in Washington, Lee worked with the British and French ministers. The latter recognized the futility of trying to procure a treaty but thought Lee might get from the American administration an official assurance of respect for the Islands' independence and a promise to repress illegal filibustering activities against them. To expect a promise of this nature was unusual, but not surprising in view of the general prevalence of American filibustering and widespread fear of it at that time. Lee did not get the declaration he wanted; but Hawaiian independence continued.

Here, then, is a case where annexation failed for the time being to materialize despite the very considerable Americanization of the Islands. The assumptions of Manifest Destiny proved premature. Lack of a united desire on the part of the American Island community plus a resolute opposition to it by leaders in the local government, particularly Wyllie, Lee, and the able young prince, Alexander, furnished an adequate basis for its defeat.

The Yankee missionaries of the mid-nineteenth century nourished their Hawaiian state on a theory of political independence. They wanted reciprocity in trade with the United States but not annexation. Sons of the missionaries, thoroughly secularized as sugar planters and business and professional men, supported this theory at least until 1890. A constitution which they had extracted from an unwilling native king, Kalakaua, three years before, threw the balance of political power into the hands of this prosperous class and reduced the native monarchy to a nominal position. But circumstances alter cases. When in 1891 the king's sister, Liliuokalani, succeeded him on the throne and set about to overthrow the whites, the latter became resolute converts to annexation as their only escape from anarchy and native misrule.

The prosperity of the American Hawaiians rested squarely on the Reciprocity Treaty of 1875 with the United States. This treaty stimulated the expansion of plantation sugar in the Islands and created a strong community of interests between them and American, particularly Californian, capitalists. Hawaiian sugar production

multiplied fivefold between 1877 and 1887 and enjoyed a favored market in California, relatively free from competition with Louisiana. Labor on the plantations was furnished by Orientals brought in on contract, and some of the best land came under the control of American stock companies owned and directed on the mainland.

In the United States the outlook for commercial reciprocity was chiefly political. A treaty negotiated with the American government in 1867 had failed of ratification because the dominant leaders in the Senate decided that, by making the Islands prosperous, reciprocity would strengthen independence, the very thing they did not want. The treaty of 1875 brought the Islands definitely within the American sphere of influence by stipulating that

so long as this treaty shall remain in force, [the King] will not lease or otherwise dispose of or create any lien upon any port, harbor, or other territory in his dominions, or grant any special privilege or rights of use therein to any other power, state or government, nor make any treaty by which any other nation shall obtain the same privileges, relative to the admission of any articles free of duty, hereby secured to the United States.⁴

Twelve years later a new reciprocity convention included, at the insistence of the Senate, a grant of an exclusive right to the United States to use and develop Pearl Harbor as a coaling station and repair base.

These treaty stipulations anchored the Islands firmly to the doctrine of special interest asserted with reference to them by Daniel Webster back in 1842. To James G. Blaine, Secretary of State under Harrison in 1889-92 and one of the foremost advocates of annexation, Hawaii ranked even above Cuba and Puerto Rico in strategic value to the United States. In fact, though not in name, the Islands were securely within the scope of the Monroe Doctrine, being recognized as part of the natural defense system of this country. The possibility of any change in their status other than in favor of the United States aroused an instinctive veto. Thus Blaine, when he was Secretary of State first under Garfield in 1881, watched the flooding of the Islands with Chinese labor with mounting distrust. "No matter how badly the planters need cheap labor," he wrote the American commissioner in Honolulu, the Islands "cannot be joined to the Asiatic system. If they drift from their independent station it must be toward assimilation and identification with the American system." At that date Blaine was not anticipating annexation, for

⁴ Malloy, *Treaties and Conventions*, p. 917.

he wrote that politically Hawaii was as "remote from American control as China." But in 1889 he drew up a draft of a treaty with the Hawaiian minister in Washington converting the Island Kingdom into an American protectorate. The United States would guarantee Hawaiian independence under this agreement but would have the right of armed intervention and a veto on all agreements made by the king with a foreign power. So great was the protest from the native Hawaiians when this project became known in Honolulu that it was dropped. Even the whites failed to throw their influence behind it.

The situation began to change in 1890. The McKinley tariff of that year depressed the position of the Hawaiian sugar growers; it put sugar on the list of duty-free imports of the United States, thereby cutting away the advantage to Hawaii of the Treaty of 1875 over other foreign sugars, and it authorized payment of a bounty of two cents per pound on home-grown sugar. White supremacy in the Islands, moreover, was challenged by dissatisfied natives and half-castes, who outnumbered the American Hawaiians in the legislature. In her eagerness to revive native culture and the independence of the native monarchy, Queen Liliuokalani, who succeeded her brother in January 1891, widened the breach with the Americans and on January 14, 1893, openly challenged them by proclaiming a new constitution by royal edict and abolishing the instrument of 1887.

Annexation to the United States was the deliberate choice made by the American Hawaiians during these three years as the only means of safeguarding their own position. They formed a secret Annexation Club in Honolulu and sent a prominent member of the American community, Lorrin A. Thurston, to Washington to make the necessary contacts with the administration. Thurston left with John W. Foster, who had taken Blaine's place at the State Department, a memorandum outlining his ideas of a bloodless revolution in Honolulu or of a coup d'état against the queen in case the latter should refuse to abdicate. At the same time the American minister in the Islands, John L. Stevens, worked with the annexationists and kept the administration in Washington informed of the situation. The issue in the Islands was by no means a simple one between the whites on the one hand and the natives and half-castes on the other, and the annexationists through 1892 hoped to form a coalition in the legislature which would establish a temporary republic and negotiate a treaty with the United States.

It was the queen who frustrated these plans for a parliamentary

revolution by her attempted coup of January 14, 1893. She failed when her half-caste ministers, fearing the power of the whites, betrayed her to the Annexation Club. The latter responded by forming a committee of safety, which appealed to Stevens for armed protection. At five o'clock on the same day 164 armed men were disembarked from the American cruiser "Boston," and after marching through the city were billeted in a hall strategically located opposite the government building held by the queen and her native forces. The revolution lasted three days, and was bloodless. The committee of safety organized a provisional government, headed by Judge Sanford B. Dole, the Hawaiian-born son of a New England missionary. Stevens then recognized the provisional government, and the queen surrendered.

The leading objective of the provisional government was annexation. A commission of five, including Thurston, left Honolulu two days after the queen's surrender and signed a treaty with Secretary Foster in Washington on February 14, 1893. This was a scant three weeks before the Republican administration was destined to go out of office. In the Senate the Democratic members, after consulting with the president-elect, Grover Cleveland, delayed action and on March 9 the new Executive withdrew the treaty from the Senate.

There seems to have been a clear-cut distinction in the minds of many Americans between outright annexation of Hawaii and mere application to it of a doctrine of special interest. The latter was not a debatable question. It was Cleveland, for example, who in 1887 had secured the exclusive use of Pearl Harbor. But from annexation, especially when it was the proposed result of a dubious revolution, the new president recoiled. The Hawaiian commission repulsed suggestions of having a popular referendum on the subject in the Islands, and Cleveland sent Senator James H. Blount of Georgia to investigate. Though merely an executive agent, whose commission was not submitted to the Senate for approval, Blount was armed with authority paramount to that of the regular American minister in Honolulu. He repudiated the protectorate which Stevens had proclaimed on February 1 and refused the olive branch proffered by the provisional government. Stevens he excoriated in the report which he rendered on July 17, 1893, and though a Southerner he remained deaf to all pleas for white supremacy in the Islands. The population was averse to annexation, he held, by more than two to one, and it craved the return of the queen to the throne and the overthrow of the provisional government.

An American Democratic administration was now confronted with the interesting necessity, if it were to be consistent with its principles, of helping to restore a foreign monarchy. The Cleveland administration was equal to this, short of employing force to dislodge the provisional government. Inasmuch as the latter was actually in power and had been recognized, Cleveland dispatched a new minister, Albert S. Willis, accredited to a government which he was to persuade to resign.¹ Willis was first to apologize to the queen and secure her written promise to pardon the revolutionists, a concession which he wrung from her with the greatest difficulty. But when he then summoned the provisional government to restore the queen he was met with a resolute refusal. Judge Dole denied the right of the President of the United States to interfere in the domestic affairs of Hawaii, and at the same time reiterated his own conviction that annexation would be ultimately achieved. This was the end of Cleveland's good intentions. He abdicated further responsibility by commending the entire problem, in a special message, to Congress. Apparently Cleveland repudiated annexation in any circumstances, for he declared that the Treaty of 1893 "contemplated a departure from unbroken American traditions in providing for the addition to our territory of islands of the sea more than two thousand miles removed from our nearest coast." Since the circumstances of 1893 did not conform to his idea of national honesty, on which he laid the greatest stress, he was spared the necessity of denying annexation in a situation which might conceivably have been more agreeable to his notions of proper moral conduct.

The provisional government of the Hawaiian Republic now took steps to put firm ground under its feet. A constitutional convention, carefully elected so as to give only annexationists representation on it, drafted a constitution which was put into effect on July 4, 1894, the date being chosen intentionally so as "to put another spoke in the wheel of annexation." The suffrage and qualifications for membership in the Island legislature were so hedged in with property and literacy requirements as to exclude the native and Oriental elements in the population. Judge Dole was named president by the convention for a six-year term.

Thus reconstituted, the American regime in Hawaii acquitted itself ably during the four years of its independent career and prepared to await a time more propitious to annexation. Somewhat unlike its Texas prototype, it made independence a necessity of the moment but never intended it to be permanent. Though recognized by all the great powers, including the United States under Cleveland,

it had its troubles, particularly the growing risk entailed by the swarm of laborers from Japan. In 1883 there had been only 116 Japanese in the Islands; thirteen years later the number had swelled to nearly twenty-five thousand, or almost one-fourth of the total Island population. After vainly trying measures of control, the Dole government in 1897 dared the hostility of Japan by arbitrarily forcing a Japanese ship laden with immigrants to leave without disembarking its passengers. Japan replied by sending a warship to Honolulu in May 1897, and the possibility of a Japanese domination over the republic thus raised became a factor in promoting the cause of annexation.

Meanwhile the issue of Hawaiian annexation in the United States tended to be absorbed into more fundamental questions of national security and expansion. It would be difficult to decide whether annexationist opinion was aroused more by arguments of national defense, or by appeals to a philosophy of national growth. Proponents of annexation employed both approaches, generally failing to make a distinction between them. The point is, however, that Hawaii was associated with the question of building an Isthmian canal and of acquiring islands or bases in the Caribbean. Those who favored acquiring Hawaii were also enthusiastic supporters of converting the Caribbean into an American lake and opening a water connection through to the Pacific. Hawaii was the vital link in a maritime empire stretching toward Asia, part of an advancing frontier, and equally an outpost of defense. Rarely was the fate of the Islands considered in terms unrelated to the general problem of acquiring hegemony over the waters and territories surrounding continental United States. Thus the Republican platform of 1896 itemized Hawaii, the Nicaraguan Canal, the Danish West Indies, and the Dominion of Canada as desirable places to be acquired. Sometimes Cuba and Samaná Bay in Santo Domingo, and likewise Samoa, were included. Bryan Democrats in 1897 specified the control of a canal, the annexation of Hawaii, and the independence of Cuba. It was under a broad conception of empire that the movement for Hawaiian annexation revived.

It was apparently the fear of Japanese aggression against the Islands, and not alone a change of administration in Washington, that precipitated the annexation issue in 1897. The McKinley administration empowered the American minister in Honolulu to declare a protectorate in case Japan should resort to violence against the island government. Furthermore, a simple treaty of annexation was negotiated with a Hawaiian commission in Washington on

June 16, 1897, and sent to the Senate. There the treaty slumbered while the Japanese issue was quietly settled by the Hawaiian government's paying an indemnity for turning away the immigrants. It was impossible to muster the necessary two-thirds vote.

The Spanish-American War furnished at last the necessary medium for annexation. The Dole government deliberately sided with the United States, employing all of its port facilities in aid of the campaign against the Philippines instead of remaining neutral. In Congress the annexationists resorted to the joint resolution as the device to realize their end, the method used in the case of Texas to circumvent opposition. They argued that annexation was necessary to the prosecution of hostilities in the Philippines. The flaws in their argument were that Hawaii as an independent country was already supplying all the help within its power, and that there was a shorter route to Manila by way of Alaska, where a base of supplies could be established if necessary. Nevertheless, annexationism won the day in the heat of enthusiasm for Dewey and the desire to back up his initial victory over the Spaniards in Manila Bay. The joint resolution passed the House on June 15, 1898, and the Senate on July 6, three days *after* the destruction of the Spanish fleet at Santiago, Cuba, and the effective winning of the war. Hawaiian annexation was at last an accomplished fact, though scarcely necessary as a war measure against Spain.

CHAPTER 45

SAMOA, 1872-1880

SAMOA is an archipelago in the South Pacific lying on the trade routes between Panama and the west coast of North America on the one hand and the ports of New Zealand, Australia, and South-east Asia on the other.¹ Of its three principal islands, Upolu in the middle is the most fertile and inhabitable, for both natives and foreigners, and contains three harbors, the most noteworthy being the port of Apia. Largest of the group but least habitable is Savaii, near neighbor to Upolu. Thirty-six miles east of Upolu is Tutuila, small-

¹ The distances are as follows: 4,160 miles to San Francisco; 5,660 to Panama; 1,560 to Auckland, New Zealand; 2,060 to Sydney, Australia.

est of the three, with its splendid landlocked harbor of Pago Pago sheltered on the south side of the island from the tropical hurricanes.

This archipelago is reputedly the original home of the Polynesian family, branches of which are to be found as far north as Hawaii and as far south as New Zealand. With the same zeal and idealism exhibited by their Yankee contemporaries in Hawaii, British missionaries Christianized the Samoans during the second half of the nineteenth century and taught them the language and the ideals of middle-class England. In contrast to the Americans in the Hawaiian kingdom, however, the English missionaries showed no genius for political leadership of the native Samoans, an opportunity which the American adventurer, Colonel A. B. Steinberger, seized in the year 1875. Meanwhile English and particularly German traders entered the Samoan Islands. A Hamburg family firm of French Huguenot origin, Godeffroy & Company, entrenched itself on the island of Upolu, staked out claims to the land, and made a determined bid for control of the important coconut oil and copra trade. Apia was the chief station of the Germans, who by 1875 were the principal alien element to be reckoned with. Their interest at this time was almost exclusively in trade. Frankest in its ambition to obtain the political mastery of Samoa and the neighboring island groups was the rising British colony of New Zealand under its aggressive prime minister, Julius Vogel. In 1874 New Zealand finally succeeded in pushing a reluctant British government in London into annexing the Fiji Islands as the first step toward a great South Pacific empire. "The ultimate object," exclaimed Vogel, "which I have in view is the establishment of the Polynesian islands as a Dominion with New Zealand the centre of the Government, and the Dominion, like Canada, to be a British Dependency."

Naval strategy in the South Pacific pivots on Samoa and Fiji. The American Navy Department was alive to this when it sent a squadron in 1839 to explore for good anchorage. Thirty years later Samoa came definitely within the range of American activity as a possible outpost for vessels from San Francisco and Panama. The completion of the Union Pacific Railroad in 1869, and rejuvenated hopes of an isthmian waterway, stimulated dreams of a trade route to the Antipodes. A New York shipbuilder, William H. Webb, projected a steamship line to operate, so he hoped, under government subsidy from San Francisco to New Zealand and Australia by way of Honolulu and Pago Pago. Failing to win a subsidy from the United States, Webb was welcomed by New Zealand, which saw in

his plan a combined rail-and-water link with England, speedier than the rival route by way of Suez Webb's scheme inspired some speculators in San Francisco to incorporate the Polynesian Land Company with the object of acquiring land in Samoa and profiting by the expected business. Indifferent success attended these dreams, but nevertheless they were directly responsible for focusing official interest on Samoa. An agent of the Webb line in Samoa, a Captain Wakeman, recommended that the United States assume control over the Islands and establish a naval base at Pago Pago. At the instance of the American consul in Honolulu, who was cognizant of Wakeman's report, Commander Meade, U.S.N., took his ship to Pago Pago and secured a treaty with the chiefs granting exclusive rights to the harbor to the United States. Meade's treaty was made in 1872 and was endorsed by the Grant administration, but it died in the Senate without coming to a vote.

A more subtle approach was made through the mission of Colonel A. B. Steinberger the following year. Steinberger was a one-time employee of James B. Stewart of San Francisco, chief promoter of the Polynesian Land Company, and an acquaintance of Webb and also of President Grant, who was apparently impressed by Webb's plans. Grant made him a confidential special agent with authority to confer with the native chiefs and advise them against granting away their lands to foreigners. This mission Steinberger accomplished with great finesse. Before the end of his first sojourn in Samoa, which lasted about half a year, the natives had accepted him as their official protector. On his return trip to America by way of Suez he concluded a deal with the Godeffroys in Hamburg, whereby they were assured protection for their interests in exchange for their approval of American annexation. From Washington he set forth once more, in December 1874, armed with presents of guns and ammunition and a personal letter of friendship from President Grant to the chiefs. This time he was accepted so whole-heartedly that he reorganized the government in the form of a constitutional monarchy, with the native kingship vested alternately over four-year periods in the two leading families, the Malietoa and the Tupua, and the premiership in himself. Unfortunately, however, the venture-some colonel aroused the antipathy of the foreign residents, including the British, German, and American consuls, who succeeded in getting him arrested and carried away in February 1876 on a British man-of-war.

But Steinberger did better than he knew. The native chiefs were well pleased and a new American consul, uninfluenced by personal

jealousy, vindicated the colonel and encouraged the chiefs to send a delegation to Washington to petition directly for annexation or a protectorate, whichever the United States should elect. Le Mamea, the "tattooed prince," and his companion, J. G. Colmesnil, who was also American vice-consul in the Islands, were cordially received in Washington by the Hayes administration. Favorable to annexation itself, the latter nevertheless appreciated the lack of general enthusiasm for such definite commitments and knew that a treaty of annexation or protection would be rejected by the Senate. Even an effort by the Samoan delegation to stir up jealousy of the English as an incentive for annexation was not sufficient persuasion to go so far. Frederick Seward, the Assistant Secretary of State, found the answer. He drafted a treaty which merely gave the United States choice of a site for a naval base at Pago Pago, though not an exclusive concession, and promised the good offices of the American government in the event of a dispute between the Samoan "government" and any foreign power. Signed January 17, 1878, this treaty met the approval of the Senate. It was a weak compromise between the few who wanted the advantage of a colony in mid-Pacific and the many who were indifferent or hostile, but it kept the American foot in the door.

The American treaty was followed by treaties between the Samoans and Germany and Great Britain, in which the Germans obtained exclusive rights to the best harbors on Upolu Island, the scene of their principal endeavors, and the English obtained an offset to the Germans. Supposedly the powers were dealing with an island government which was independent and able to stand on its own feet. But the Germans displayed an increasing zeal to annex the archipelago, and after 1884 their government supported them. In the practical sense Samoa thus became in 1879 a protectorate of the three powers acting jointly, since the American consuls in the Islands insisted on taking a hand under the treaty of 1878 and thwarting the Germans. The American government might have ignored its rights under this treaty, especially since it made no use of Pago Pago as a naval base and silently acquiesced in German encroachment. But it was never willing to do this, and in consequence of intense friction with Germany in 1889 it was drawn into a tripartite agreement at Berlin by which the native monarchy was to be governed by two neutral European officials. Actually the German, British, and American consuls in Samoa continued to be the uneasy and divided uncrowned heads over the Islands. The United States complained of the entanglement but had nothing better to offer. The

attitude of President Grover Cleveland was quite characteristic: he repeatedly denounced the "entangling alliance" with Germany and Britain, and yet he never entertained the notion of retiring from the field. The only other choice was simple partition of the Islands, which the German government proposed in 1897. The McKinley administration favored this as a realistic approach, and a bargain was struck whereby Germany took the two large islands, Upolu and Savaii, and the tributary islets, and the United States assumed outright ownership over Tutuila and its tiny dependencies. Germany compensated Britain by colonial concessions in other fields. But at length she was herself evicted by a New Zealand expedition in 1914, which thus satisfied a long-standing New Zealand craving.

Thus by long indirection the United States arrived in December 1899 at the point designed by Commander Meade's Treaty of 1872. Colonel Steinberger, playing a lone hand, blazed the trail successfully by his discreet activities in 1873-1876, and the Treaty of 1878 rescued the question from total eclipse so far as the United States was concerned. Private enterprise initiated the issue and then dropped it. But conceptions of naval power and national right supported it through a score of uneasy years to the time when naval expansion was more popular. Tutuila's sole function as a naval base was recognized immediately following the Treaty of 1899, when it was placed under the jurisdiction of the Navy Department, where it still remains.

PART III

Neutrality & Isolation

INTRODUCTION

NEUTRALITY, as a practical program of action by the United States, dates from the great series of wars which broke out between Britain and France in 1793. It was a matter of keeping the country's independence or of falling victim to certain definite disadvantages sure to be reaped from the alliance with France concluded fifteen years before. That alliance still continued. And while it did not oblige the United States to enter the war, it nevertheless implied certain privileges for the French. The latter desired to use their American ally as a lever for recovering their own position in North America: they wanted American recruits, marching under the French banner, to attack New Orleans and the Spanish Southwest, and they expected to entice American privateers into plundering British commerce in the Caribbean. Consent to the operation of this program meant ruin for American independence. On land and sea the British held a powerful club over the country, and if the French fulfilled their hopes of victory, they and not the United States would call the tune in North America.

Washington's troubles lay less with France herself than with his own people. The general inclination was to fall in with the French plans and give Citizen Genet, the charming young envoy from Paris, the co-operation he wanted. Genet did not seek or expect help from the government of the United States; he could gain his ends by appeals to the people direct, and no existing law stood in his way. Popular sympathies were decidedly with the French, and the taste for adventure and plunder at the expense of the British and Spaniards was very strong. Washington grasped the serious consequences of such partiality and developed a policy of strict neutrality to offset it. Thus he admonished his countrymen:

The duty and interest of the United States require that they should with sincerity and good faith adopt and pursue a conduct friendly and impartial toward the belligerent powers. . . . Whosoever of the citizens of the United States shall render himself liable to punishment or forfeiture

under the law of nations by committing, aiding, or abetting hostilities against any of the said powers, or by carrying to any of them those articles which are deemed contraband by the modern usage of nations, will not receive the protection of the United States against such punishment or forfeiture; and . . . I have given instructions to those officers to whom it belongs to cause prosecutions against all persons who shall, within the cognizance of the courts of the United States, violate the law of nations with respect to the powers at war, or any of them.¹

Let us note that the President faced three practical issues in 1793; how to stop the recruiting on American soil of men to fight for the French cause, how to prevent the French from utilizing American ports and ships in waging war on British commerce; and how to avoid responsibility for American vessels that carried contraband on the high seas. Questions like these formed the chief substance of the law of neutrality, which was still somewhat new to the European state system of the eighteenth century. It was generally recognized by this time that a sovereign state might remain neutral in a war, if it chose. This had not always been the case, however. The "father of international law," Hugo Grotius, for instance, had classified wars as either just or unjust, and had counseled third parties to take sides against the unjust. Grotius wrote in the year 1625, when the great Thirty Years' War made it difficult for any state to remain disinterested. Nevertheless there was a tendency even in the century before Grotius for certain states to remain apart from the chronic struggles of their neighbors; and these states experimented with certain rules designed to serve their own practical interest in peace. England was one such state whose geographical isolation promoted indifference to the ordinary vicissitudes of European politics, and the practices adopted during the age of Elizabeth added their contribution to the general law of neutrality. All that this latter phrase implied was the existence of a body of treaties and customs which were recognized as proper for a neutral state to follow.

By the middle of the eighteenth century it was agreed that a neutral nation was an impartial nation, but opinions differed broadly when it came to putting the definition to work. The questions with which Washington dealt were typical problems of neutrality in the eighteenth century, but there were as yet no fixed rules as to how they should be treated. Vattel, the Swiss writer from whose work the men of the American Revolution chiefly got their impressions of international law, roundly denounced the enlisting of soldiers in one country by another; yet the fact was that this custom was well es-

¹ Richardson, *Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, I, 148-49.

tablished at the time Vattel wrote and that it was also common for one sovereign to hire out soldiers to another and still remain neutral. Vattel was preaching a reform, not a condition. Byngershoek, a great Dutch authority who wrote a few years earlier, saw nothing odd in the practice and likened the purchase of soldiers from a neutral nation to the purchase of munitions

As has been intimated, neutral nations shaped the rules of their conduct more to suit their particular interests than to conform to any abstract notions of impartiality. As the citizen of a country that had suffered conspicuously from the constant drafts by neighboring states on its man power, Vattel handled the subject of recruiting with considerable severity. Switzerland could hardly be free and independent until this evil had been stopped. And the United States in 1793 was moved by equally pressing considerations. Unless it could make its neutrality effective, it could hardly survive the struggle except as the dependent of either Britain or France. After the worst period of crisis had been passed, and Washington had been able to restrain popular impetuosity, Congress enacted a neutrality law designed to settle finally the questions which had been matters of controversy. The act laid certain prohibitions against individuals on American soil in time of a foreign war. They were not to enlist, or to solicit enlistment, fit out armed vessels, or organize military expeditions in aid of one party or the other. The measure was somewhat in advance of the accepted standards of the day, but it did not of course affect the liberty of a citizen to leave the United States and enlist elsewhere. Three years later a supplementary act was passed to prohibit citizens from fitting out privateers abroad for the service of a foreign state, as well as at home; but the attempt to stretch the authority of the United States over the activities of its citizens in foreign countries proved impracticable, and this law was eventually repealed.

The whole of Washington's administration was an object lesson in neutrality. Philadelphia was a scene of French intrigue, just as it had been during the Revolution, and popular sentiment was sharply divided between Francophiles and Anglophiles. The breach became the more dramatic in consequence of the treaty made by John Jay with Great Britain in 1794. The treaty gave Britain a free hand to search American ships on the high seas for contraband, but it also strengthened American security at home by means of the British pledge to evacuate the Northwest posts. It was never intended to make an issue with Great Britain out of neutral rights for American shipping; Washington had guarded himself against such a contin-

gency by disavowing protection for ships carrying contraband, and Britain mollified the United States to the extent of agreeing in the treaty to a definite list of contraband and of promising to pay for any goods not on the list that she decided to seize. The French pursued the same tactics as the British wherever they could on the high seas, yet they complained of Jay's Treaty with Britain as an act of treachery against France. French sympathizers among the Americans, including Madison, Monroe, and Jefferson, ignored this fact; and the Treaty was made the occasion for a passionate outburst of popular resentment against Great Britain. Jay was burned in effigy and Alexander Hamilton was stoned by a mob. Passage of the Treaty through the Senate and the appropriation of certain sums for the payment of claims for damages to British ships inflicted by privateers based on American ports became a supreme test of Washington's leadership.

The Jay Treaty accomplished what Washington had believed it would: it made American independence more real with respect to the Western country, and it led to the important treaty with Spain the following year by which the Spaniards conceded the right to use the port of New Orleans. This gave reality to the right of navigation of the Mississippi and insured the loyalty of the frontiersmen to the United States. The Francophiles had foreseen neither of these advantages, however, and the French envoy who had succeeded Genet in Philadelphia worked on members of Congress to defeat Jay's Treaty. He lost by only a small margin, for the vote of approval in the Senate was a bare two-thirds. French intrigue continued to plague Washington for the remaining years of his administration. Ignorant of the President's own determination to retire, Monsieur Adet schemed to defeat his renomination, and when, partly to mar the plot, Washington chose the date, September 17, 1796, on which to issue his Farewell Address, French influence was thrown against the election of John Adams and in favor of Jefferson.

But Washington could speak with far greater assurance in 1796 than he could have done three years before, because the country had begun to feel the benefits of his policies. Mindful of the contrast between these solid achievements and the kind of action for which the public had clamored in 1793, Washington had much to say of the evil of popular passion stepping in to overcome the government's own cool judgment. He warned:

Nothing is more essential than that permanent, inveterate antipathies against particular nations and passionate attachments for others should be excluded, and that in place of them just and amicable feelings toward

all should be cultivated. The nation which indulges toward another an habitual hatred or an habitual fondness is in some degrees a slave. It is a slave to its animosity or to its affection, either of which is sufficient to lead it astray from its duty and its interest.

Washington vindicated his own leadership and reproached those who had allowed hatred of England or love of France to color their judgment. "The nation prompted by ill-will and resentment," he continued, "sometimes impels to war the government contrary to the best calculations of policy. The government sometimes participates in the national propensity, and adopts through passion what reason would reject." And after denouncing the "insidious wiles of foreign influence," which had tried to wreck his policies, Washington came to his famous argument for freedom of action and detachment from the ordinary effects of European politics. He was not pleading for isolation. Geography makes it possible, he said, for the United States to distinguish between the "primary interests" of Europe and its own. Much depended on Americans remaining "one people, under an efficient government," if they were to reap the benefits of their "detached and distant situation." He asked:

Why forego the advantages of so peculiar a situation? Why quit our own to stand upon foreign ground? Why, by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalry, interest, humor, or caprice?

It is natural to assume that the Father of His Country was expressing himself somewhat in terms of the doctrine of the two spheres, but he was too practical a statesman to carry the reliance on geographical separation to an extreme. Again his experiences with the French Alliance furnished him his chief guide. "It is our true policy to steer clear of permanent alliances with any portion of the foreign world," he declared, "so far, I mean, as we are now at liberty to do it; for let me not be understood as capable of patronizing infidelity to existing engagements." But, "taking care always to keep ourselves by suitable establishments on a respectable defensive posture, *we may safely trust to temporary alliances for extraordinary emergencies*"² Actually the French Alliance, in spite of its provision for permanency, was no real embarrassment to the administration. Washington was aggravated by the internal division of opinion, which was traceable to a smouldering resentment against Britain on the one hand and a foolish attachment to French republicanism on the other. The President might have implemented the French

² Richardson, *op cit*, I, 215. Italics inserted.

Alliance as the French themselves had hoped, but the terms of the treaty did not require him to do so. He left it just where it had been, a simple guaranty of each other's territory in North America and the West Indies, respectively. The alliance terminated with the French attacks on American commerce in 1798.

The Farewell Address expounds the essential American concept of neutrality, to wit, impartiality and independence in appraising the effects of a foreign war upon the United States. Woodrow Wilson appealed to the people in 1914 to keep their intellectual poise in much the same spirit as Washington had done a hundred and eighteen years before. But Wilson, fearing violent passions springing from the cosmopolitan origins of the people of his generation, attempted to anticipate the event. Like Washington, Wilson exercised his own balanced judgment; but in the altered circumstances of 1914 there was nothing in common with the situation of 1793. The World War was soon shown to be no "ordinary vicissitude" of European politics, and neutrality furnished a useful period of readjustment in American thinking preliminary to the adoption of a forward policy.

Impartiality of conduct in a foreign war required the performance of but two duties by the neutral, according to the precedents of the Washington administration and the provisions of the neutrality law of 1794. These were (1) to prevent the enlistment of men on the soil of the United States for service under a foreign prince or state, and (2) to prevent the commissioning of privateers or other armed vessels in American ports for like service or the basing of such vessels on American ports. Practical considerations produced these rules, as we have seen, and they remained the substance of the American neutrality concept until the period of the World War. A neutrality law almost identical to the Act of 1794 was passed in 1819 by the British Parliament, and the rules as thus laid down were accepted by the general body of sovereign states in the nineteenth century as good international law. No additional duties were expected of a neutral. He was not, for instance, called upon to forbid his subjects from going abroad voluntarily to enlist; neither was he bound to restrict the trade or freedom of movement of his subjects. Genet raised a point with Jefferson over the American arms trade with Britain in May 1793, and the Secretary of State's reply defined a viewpoint that remained standard with the United States until 1935:

Our citizens have always been free to make, vend, and export arms; . . . it is the constant occupation and livelihood of some of them. To

suppress their callings, the only means, perhaps, of their subsistence, because a war exists in foreign and distant countries, in which we have no concern, would scarcely be expected. . . .³

Prior to 1935 the only important alteration in the original neutrality statute was made in March 1817. The law had forbidden the fitting out of armed vessels in time of war for or against a "foreign prince or state" with whom the United States was at peace, but it had not anticipated foreign revolutions in which American privateers might figure. The Latin-American revolutions against Spain, which commenced during the Napoleonic wars, were the signal for various forms of armed assistance sent from the United States in their behalf. Privateers, fitted out in Baltimore, preyed on Spanish commerce in the Caribbean. By 1817 the Monroe administration had reason to believe that if these depredations were allowed to continue they would lead to a general war into which the United States would be dragged; but it was powerless to stop the outfitting of privateers under the Act of 1794, because the rebellious nations of Latin America were not legally definable as either princes or states. An American federal court so ruled. Once more higher considerations of public policy influenced a change in the law; Congress was induced to add the words "colony, district, or people" to the original clause, and the executive branch of the government was now armed with full power to suppress the outfitting of privateers. A new neutrality law was enacted the following April 20, 1818, which codified the previous neutrality legislation. It remains on the statute books to this day.

The effectiveness of neutrality as an American policy, however, is better determined by reference to actual practice than to mere legislation, and also to the manner in which the courts interpreted the law. With few exceptions the American neutrality law got its test during the nineteenth century in connection with revolutions, rebellions, and conspiracies to foment rebellion in the neighboring countries of the Western Hemisphere. The Texan revolution of 1835 against Mexico offered a sure temptation to sidestep the law, and the ease with which armed bands escaped to fight for Texas indicated that neutrality could be only a make-believe where the interests and sympathies of the United States were affected. Recruiting for Texas furnished the experience for the filibustering expeditions which disturbed the peace of Mexico, Cuba, and the Central American republics during the 1850's. It was never judicially determined

³ Jefferson, *Writings* (Ford ed.), VI, 254-55

whether or not a filibuster was a pirate and therefore liable to capture and punishment by any government capable of intercepting him. Filibustering bands were not interested in common plunder, but they were bent on revolution and conquest in the region of the Caribbean. They were exceedingly popular as advance agents of Manifest Destiny during the decade, and the government made only weak attempts to thwart them. Furthermore, at a time during the Civil War when the Union was hard-pressed for recruits, its consuls and agents engaged in a covert activity in European countries in search of men and thus proved that the United States could be careless of the neutrality laws of other countries when the occasion demanded. In Canada crimping was common. After the American Civil War, Cuba became the center of political unrest in the Caribbean, and attempts at filibustering and gun-running from the American coast became more common than ever. Revolutionary *juntas*, plotting in the United States to liberate the island from Spanish rule, proved themselves past masters in the art of law evasion and were abetted by popular opinion. During these years, however, the government felt itself strong enough seriously to attempt to frustrate the expeditions. It could not prevent the planning of conspiracies on American soil, but it did try to stop expeditions from leaving American ports. The fact that the warfare in Cuba was technically regarded as an insurrection, rather than a civil war or revolution, helped the conspirators because this was a supposedly new type of conflict to which the courts refused for a while to apply the neutrality law, nearly half of the known expeditions escaped.⁴

Elsewhere we have described the problem occasioned by the escape of the "Alabama" and other armed raiders from British ports under the Confederate flag to prey on Union commerce. These vessels were built in British yards, and their departure was planned in such a way as to stay within the law, which was identical in wording with the American neutrality law. The fact that judicial opinion in Great Britain ruled against confiscation of the ships, and that the British government did not feel free to pursue and capture the ones that had got away, showed that the prohibition against the departure of armed vessels could be incomplete. The "Alabama" was *unarmed* when she left British shores—her armament was sent after her. Furthermore, an armed vessel had left the port of New Orleans in aid of the Texan

⁴ It is but fair to point out that Europe too had its revolutions, and that expeditions similar to American filibustering were not unknown in European states. The expedition of Garibaldi and the Thousand from Genoa in May 1860 is the best-known such case.

rebels, as we note appropriately below, though the precedent was apparently unknown in 1862

Practical considerations induced the British government to agree with the American government by treaty, May 8, 1871, on three rules of neutral duty, and to make the rules retroactive in practice for the purpose of validating the claims the United States was determined to make for the depredations of the "Alabama." The rules were allegedly interpretive of the original neutrality statutes of either country, but it is questionable whether they were actually good law until declared to be so in 1871. In other words, there is no sound proof that Great Britain violated her neutrality in 1862 in order to aid the South; on the contrary, it was a question of close interpretation of the law, and British courts at the time decided in a sense opposite to the rules laid down by the Treaty of 1871. In summary these rules stipulated as follows

A neutral government is bound—

First, to use due diligence to prevent the fitting out, arming, or equipping, within its jurisdiction, of any vessel which it has reasonable ground to believe is intended to cruise or to carry on war against a Power with which it is at peace, and also to use like diligence to prevent the departure from its jurisdiction of any vessel intended to cruise or carry on war as above . . .

Secondly, not to permit or suffer either belligerent to make use of its ports or waters as the base of naval operations against the other, or for the purpose of the renewal or augmentation of military supplies or arms, or the recruitment of men

Thirdly, to exercise due diligence in its own ports and waters, and, as to all persons within its jurisdiction, to prevent any violation of the foregoing obligations and duties.⁵

The treaty rules did not go nearly so far as the American government had desired. It had wanted the neutral bound to prevent the *construction* of a suspected vessel; the "Alabama" had been constructed in England but not "fitted out." The United States also wanted a neutral obligated to use its naval forces to pursue and detain such a vessel, if it should escape, but this stipulation was likewise rejected. The real usefulness of the rules of due diligence lay in the fact that they set up a formula under cover of which the two countries could peacefully resolve an unusually venomous dispute between themselves. Politics rather than legal principle dictated the "Alabama" settlement, though the treaty rules, to be sure, strength-

⁵ Article VI of the Treaty of Washington. J. B. Moore, *International Arbitrations* (6 vols., Washington, 1898), I, 550

ened the law of neutrality in that they emphasized that a neutral was bound to act upon suspicion. The British neutrality law was amended in 1871 to conform precisely with the new rules; but inasmuch as the Americans had insisted that their own law had always been interpreted in the sense of these rules they made no corresponding change in its wording. Eventually the rules of due diligence were embodied in general international law through the Hague Convention of 1907.

Questions of policy gave birth to the law of neutrality in the first instance and were behind its evolution, and equally pressing considerations ushered it out. Few tests confronted it during the World War of 1914-1918. But the situation was vastly different in 1940. Faced with an emergency unknown previously in its history, the United States officially repudiated the rules of neutral duty set up at its own instance in 1871, when on September 2, 1940, it transferred directly fifty fully armed destroyers to the British Navy for use against German submarines.

So far we have discussed neutrality in terms of the *duties* owed by a neutral. We now turn to the question of what the United States, as a neutral, proposed to consider as its *rights*. The subject takes us back to the Treaty Plan of 1776, which was drawn up by the Continental Congress to guide the American commissioners in negotiating commercial agreements with France and as many other European states as possible. The object was to break loose from the British mercantile system, build up direct contacts in trade with European Continental states, and enjoy the benefits of neutrality when Europe should be at war. In general the treaty of friendship and commerce with France carried out the idea, and similar treaties were concluded after the Revolution with the Netherlands, Sweden, and Prussia. In his neutrality policy Washington had emphasized the *duties* of the neutral; but the Treaty Plan of 1776 had conceived of neutrality in terms of commercial advantage and had emphasized only the *rights* of the neutral.

With the outbreak of the great war in 1793 the United States began to elaborate upon its conception of neutral rights. In substance it meant by this two things: (1) the right to carry on its prewar business as usual, with the least possible interference from the belligerents, which meant, of course, the right to trade with the neutrals of Europe as well as the belligerents; (2) the right to get all the war business possible, and profit from the needs of both the warring parties without regard to the outcome of the war. The

assumption in 1776 was that the United States, once independent, would be indifferent to the political fortunes of Europe. This was a conception of isolation, as defined by Tom Paine and John Adams. As a seafaring people, able to carry the goods of other nations, and as a country with a long list of exports, especially of provisions, tobacco, and naval stores, the United States saw its maritime interests similar to those of the trading nations of Continental Europe and opposed to those of Great Britain.

The views of 1776 proved much too rosy in spite of the favorable commercial treaties, the American trade with the Continent showed no great increase, but tended to fall back into the grooves that it had followed under the British colonial system. Most of the business in foreign trade was with the British. With the outbreak of war, however, there were distinct opportunities for commercial expansion with the Continent, especially with France, and these opportunities formed the substance of the American claims for neutral rights.

One way of defining neutral rights was to affiliate them with the ancient concept of freedom of the seas, which derived from the rule of the Roman law that the seas, unlike the land, cannot be appropriated or owned by anyone. In this sense "freedom of the seas" meant that neutrals might carry on commerce in war just as in peace, and reap all the extra advantages thereby, without any interference whatsoever by the belligerents. Jefferson tried to shape his policies under this concept, which, if practicable, would have functioned to the utmost profit of American commerce. The Treaty Plan, however, had not gone so far, but had avowed certain principles which European powers, including even Great Britain, had laid down in treaties during the eighteenth century.

These principles were as follows: (1) Free ships make free goods, except contraband of war. That is, the cargo of an enemy being carried by a neutral is not liable to seizure. (2) Contraband (prohibited goods) is to be itemized by treaty, and limited to arms and munitions. (3) A neutral ship is entitled to participate in the coastal and colonial trade of a belligerent. This was meant primarily as an opening wedge penetrating the closed mercantile system utilized by every country in the eighteenth century, which prohibited outside parties from sharing in its carrying trade. France had established a precedent during the Seven Years' War: to save the trade with her colonies from British warships, she had temporarily opened it to neutral ships. But Britain had refused to honor the change, and applied the Rule of 1756 to the effect that a trade that was closed to

neutrals in times of peace was likewise closed in time of war. With an eye on the rich French colonial trade of the West Indies, the Americans in 1776 and thereafter sponsored the French view of wartime carrying trade.

(4) A fourth principle which was just beginning to emerge in the latter part of the eighteenth century, but which was not recognized as a separate branch of the law until the Napoleonic wars, was the principle of blockade. The Americans were willing to recognize only a close-in blockade, that is, a cordon of ships off an enemy coast which had been duly proclaimed as blockaded; but that was not the way in which the British, who developed the blockade, customarily operated it. The British type of blockade was (and is) the long-range blockade—interception of vessels en route to the enemy coast simply by controlling their operations through certain narrow waters such as the English Channel. The geography of British sea power naturally provides for such a system, while the close-in blockade obviously has only a limited use. With scant regard for geographic fact, the Americans characterized the usual type of British blockade as a "paper blockade," whereas the realities were quite the opposite. The chief advantage of the blockade over the older practice of intercepting contraband, from the British standpoint, was that all property could be intercepted at sea when destined for the enemy.

The type of contraband the United States was willing to recognize was hardly calculated to interfere with the profits of American trade in those days, since the United States exported few weapons. Furthermore, the arms trade at sea was comparatively unimportant for any nation in the eighteenth century, with the notable exception of the American Revolution, and the inclusion of weapons on the contraband list was regarded as innocuous. Naval stores and ship's timber were the vital products, since they came from the Baltic and the American colonies but were essentials for all seafaring nations. They figured vitally in the wars between Britain and France, and Britain had treaties with both Denmark and Sweden which included these products in the list. The British won an important concession from John Jay in 1794 in getting these items recognized as contraband. This was a decided expansion of the original list. Furthermore, they obtained the right to seize provisions, also an American export, though in this case they agreed to indemnify the owners. In those days the trade in food products across the ocean was generally less important than in recent years; European countries raised their own food, and only in times of crop failure was its importation an

urgent problem. Such an emergency having arisen in France in 1793, the British had treated provisions temporarily as contraband; hence their desire to be at liberty to repeat the performance whenever it was expedient. Jay's Treaty was quite in accord with the characteristic eighteenth-century practice: contraband was never regarded as a fixed, unchangeable list of goods, but was the result of bargains struck between belligerents and neutrals. Considering that the United States had no power to enforce its own definition of contraband, the stipulations of the Jay Treaty were reasonable and sane. At the same time they reversed the extravagant expectations of 1776 and formally recognized that American seagoing trade could not be so easily dissociated from the British system as fondly supposed. Hence the explosion of popular wrath against the Treaty.

Out of the wars of the French Revolution and Napoleon the United States reaped a harvest of profits. The money came from the carrying trade and the general export of provisions, and until 1807 the British did little to interfere with it. Except for the practice of impressment of seamen, there was little for the United States to complain about. Even this practice, so offensive to American ideas of individual liberty and national honor, must be set in its framework of high profits and wages paid by the American merchant marine if it is to be properly evaluated. Beginning in 1806, both the French and the British tightened up on the economic warfare at sea; and Jefferson, deceiving himself and his party with exaggerated notions of the economic power the United States held over the belligerents, launched an ambitious program of embargo and nonintercourse. The effect was to convert profits into losses but to bring no change in the character of warfare at sea. In 1812 the United States declared that it went to war in defense of its neutral rights; actually there were deeper issues at stake, as we remember, and the war came to an end without altering the British concept of maritime warfare.

The nineteenth century continued to grope for fixed principles governing maritime warfare, which would satisfy both belligerents and neutrals. A formula was set forth in the Declaration of Paris in 1856 to which all seven of the powers participating in the peace treaty ending the Crimean War agreed. The Declaration asserted:

1. Privateering is and remains abolished.
2. The neutral flag covers enemy's goods, with the exception of contraband of war.
3. Neutral goods, with the exception of contraband of war, are not liable to capture under enemy's flag.

4. Blockades, in order to be binding, must be effective, that is to say, maintained by a force sufficient really to prevent access to the coast of the enemy.

Actually the Declaration left the question wide open: it made no attempt to circumscribe the terms "contraband" and "blockade," on the meaning of which rested the efficacy of all maritime warfare; neither did it refer to the principle of continuous voyage, which the British had developed in the Napoleonic wars to put a stop to the American carriage of French colonial products. In order to evade the Rule of 1756 the Americans had resorted to an indirect voyage from French West Indian ports to France by way of a United States port, and had made riches out of the business until British prize courts ruled that the voyage was really continuous and therefore not *bona fide* neutral commerce.

The Declaration of Paris was suited to a conflict like the Crimean War, where the theater of operations was limited; it had only academic bearing on a great struggle like the American Civil War, which broke out only five years later. Economic strangulation of the enemy in the latter case indicated greater possibilities of success than in previous struggles, and the United States developed it remorselessly. To reach the desired end, so far as international law was concerned, all that was necessary was to modify the conception of blockade and extend the principle of continuous voyage.⁶ The Union Navy was bent on intercepting the arms traffic from Europe and the export of cotton bales from the South principally, but by adjusting the law of blockade to the situation it could with equal plausibility confiscate all property at sea that it chose to seize.

Meanwhile common practice during the century had tended to distinguish between absolute and conditional contraband, the difference being that the former was universally recognized as goods intended for war purposes, while cargo belonged to the second category only if intended for direct shipment to the armed forces of the enemy. Arms of all kinds were, of course, absolute contraband, but

⁶ Though invited, the United States declined to accede to the Declaration of Paris in spite of the fact that the Declaration coincided with American principles. The clause relating to privateering kept the American government out, for it still had a lingering feeling that it might be dependent on this type of warfare. The *quid pro quo* which it requested, and was refused, was the inclusion in the Declaration of a statement that all private property, except contraband, would be exempted from capture at sea. In the Civil War the United States discarded privateering and relied wholly on naval power, thus proving that its own apprehensions in 1856 were groundless. It is difficult to see, however, how the Declaration of Paris would have altered the naval war against the South in any way had the United States subscribed to it. The Declaration was merely a harmless formula.

food products were so considered only when consigned to the enemy forces. A grandiose attempt was made in 1909 by the leading naval powers of the world, including Great Britain and the United States, to decide which products were absolute contraband, which were conditional, and which should be placed on a free list and made immune from interference. In addition, an effort was made to define the rules of blockade and continuous voyage more explicitly in the hope of separating for all time the rights of neutrals from the rights of belligerents. The resulting Declaration of London appeared to be a complete codification of the rules of maritime warfare. It got serious consideration even from the British Parliament but was thrown out when Lord Northcliffe of the *London Times* began to show how damaging it would be to the British cause in a European war.

It remained for the experience of the World War of 1914-1918, coming only five years after, to show how utterly theoretical the Declaration of London had been.⁷ Products that had been included in the "free list" turned out to be among the most potent weapons of war, and the restrictions imposed on "continuous voyage" had been drafted without reference to a possible Anglo-German war. Actually the war developed into a contest between Britain and Germany to see which could strangle the other first. The British overcame the supposed limitations of international law principally by expanding the list of contraband and by applying the doctrine of continuous voyage to the traffic passing through the neutral states adjoining Germany. By 1916 the distinction between contraband and noncontraband had vanished. The war was peculiar in that Germany's small neighbors remained neutral, but the British achieved an effective blockade of Germany only by controlling the neutral commerce too. Naturally this gave a new twist to the question of neutral rights.

Toward the British the United States assumed a position of legal rectitude, but its case was weak on several counts. It had found convenient ways of amending international law itself in the Civil War, and while theoretically it favored restricted contraband lists it had

⁷ The Declaration of London never went into effect. The United States Senate advised and consented to it, but the Taft administration, learning that the British would refuse their approval, withheld ratification. If the Declaration had been in operation in 1861, it is difficult to see how the Union could have carried on a successful blockade of the South without disregarding it. The Declaration stipulated that "a blockade must not extend beyond the ports and coasts belonging to or occupied by the enemy." But the Northern blockade functioned best at long range. Furthermore, it would be hard to fancy the United States honoring the Declaration in the great struggle against Germany and Japan.

always in the past left the particular definition of contraband to the belligerent. With the practical arguments overwhelmingly in favor of augmenting the list after 1914, the American government raised no serious objection; and in spite of the alleged interference with neutral rights, the profits of American business continued to swell even as the contraband list grew longer. Practically speaking there was nothing left of neutral rights after the war but a lifeless skeleton. Meanwhile the Germans in using the submarine had challenged the traditional rights of the neutral in an even more elemental way. No neutral could sail the seas without fear of destruction. Obviously the conditions of modern warfare had precipitated a revolution.

It was President Wilson's intention frankly to discard neutrality as obsolete at the end of the war and substitute for it the principle of collective action. That is what the United States in fact had done in 1917, the real revolution in American thought had begun before that; from a feeling that the United States owed a moral obligation not to push its claims for neutral rights against Great Britain, lest it thus contribute to the German cause, American opinion passed to the conviction that Germany was a ruthless aggressor. On this larger ground, rather than on the specific submarine issue, the United States joined in the war against her. Wilson developed a vital interest in obtaining a just peace, and he brought into play the idea of a collective interest in the peace familiar to the time of Grotius. The Covenant of the League of Nations was promoted to this end, and was based on the sound assumption that the conditions of peace must be continually subject to international review if they are to possess vitality.

In previous chapters we have described the extravagant hopes of the first World War, sadly punctured by the Treaty of Versailles, and the setting in of a violent counter-revolution in American thought which tore up the Treaty, so far as the United States was concerned and repudiated the League of Nations. The lessons of the war in practical co-operation were lost, only to be revived with redoubled force in the midst of a great world emergency twenty years later. We should add that the idea of distinguishing morally between an aggressor and his victim was in the meantime by no means destroyed, however, and that it received powerful reinforcement in the Kellogg Peace Pact of 1928. It was a force to be reckoned with in American foreign policy during the chaotic years of the 1930's.

Meanwhile the isolationist counter-revolution, having successfully kept the United States apart from the international peace structure during the 1920's, turned back during the 1930's to neu-

trality as an affirmative means of realizing its dreams. Those dreams were summed up in the slogan, "Keep out of war," the popularity of which grew the more fanatical in proportion to the increasing frequency of the war scares. Neutrality as conceived in this mood became, not an exhibition of national strength and courage and soundness of judgment, as evidenced by Washington, but a demonstration of mass terror, a frenzied search for any port in a storm. It is an important fact that the new neutrality was a made-in-Congress system, that it was forced upon the Executive against its will, and that the legislation which resulted displayed the inconsistencies and fallacies of sectional hatreds within the country as well as disagreements among the isolationists themselves. In other words, the underlying circumstances in this problem of policy-making were quite the reverse of that in Washington's day, when the people cried aloud for war and the Executive breasted the popular tide with difficulty. It bears repeating that Washington's objective was not simply to "keep out of war" but to strengthen the independence and security of the nation. There is nothing in common between the objectives of Washington and the "peace-at-any-price" spirit so prevalent in the 1930's.

The circumstances in which the new neutrality legislation was set up, its principal features, and the reasons for its failure have been outlined in a previous chapter. Four different neutrality laws were enacted in 1935, 1936, 1937, and 1939, respectively, each one cut to suit a particular emergency that had arisen in Europe. All four ignored the increasing menace in the Far East and were built around a pattern of theoretical causes that were supposed to be fixed factors in involving the United States in war. If, according to the theory of the legislation, these causes could be anticipated and proper safeguards could be prescribed by law, the great end of American foreign policy would be served. The country would remain at peace. The pattern of fixed causes that Congress selected turned in the main on the question of neutral rights, the belief that insistence on maintaining these rights had been the reason for involvement in European struggles of the past. Consequently, the theory of isolation on which Congress now acted presents a striking contrast to that which was projected by the Treaty Plan of 1776. Hence the provision for an embargo on arms, munitions, and implements of war, the prohibition of extending private loans to belligerents, the requirement that all purchases made in the United States by belligerents be paid for in advance of shipment and transported on their own ships ("cash and carry"), the interdiction against American citizens

traveling on the ships of belligerent nations, and particularly the obligation laid on the President to proclaim as combat zones those sections of the high seas which were dangerous for neutral shipping. Actually this meant the areas of effective submarine operations, from which American ships were to keep out. Since it gave to belligerents, *particularly to Germany*, the practical right to mark off certain sections of the ocean, it was a negation of the principle of freedom of the seas.

The fundamental difficulty with the neutrality laws was their segregation of private rights and interests from national policies and their assumption that the foreign policy of the United States had operated in the past chiefly for the benefit of private interests. It was wrongly believed that the United States had had no better cause for going to war than the defense of neutral rights. Considerations of national security in relation to the balance of power in Europe and Asia were simply ignored, and the laws rested on the simple assumption that the width of the ocean was sufficient protection. This was a reiteration of the doctrine of the two spheres in its extremest form, and was based upon a serious misapprehension of the means by which the United States had interpreted its security in the past. As demonstrated in the preceding chapters of this volume, American diplomacy had never in the history of the United States been satisfied to practice the doctrine of the two spheres or to rely upon it as the basis of the nation's safety. The theory of the neutrality laws, in so far as they were motivated by any one theory, was that the complex nexus of ideas and practices that formed the substance of American foreign policy, past and present, could be reduced to the simplicity of a single formula under which the country could be automatically insulated against war. We are familiar with the fiasco of the neutrality legislation from a reading of the chapter on the Second World War. Between 1939 and 1941 the country underwent a second complete revolution in thought, it reacted violently against the aggressions of Germany and turned vigorously to developing a system of collective security thoroughly in accord with Wilsonian conceptions. Neutrality as an instrument of policy was discarded before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor catapulted the United States into formal hostilities. The Lend-Lease Act of March 1941 made an anachronism of the neutrality legislation, and its vital portions were formally repealed in the following November. And with the advent of the United Nations, neutrality vanished, both as an idea and as an instrument of policy.

FOREIGN ENLISTMENT

THE RUDIMENTS of neutrality according to American law require that no one enlist men or fit out hostile expeditions on the soil of the United States against any "foreign prince, state, colony, district, or people" with whom the United States is at peace. The rule was an outgrowth of the troubles with French recruiting in 1793, and was later made more sweeping in an effort to cover the Latin-American revolutions against Spain. No contradiction was intended, however, of the principle, native to the United States, that a citizen may voluntarily leave the country or change his allegiance; and this principle was interpreted to the extent that the citizen may emigrate with the intention of enlisting abroad but will not in so doing lose his rights as a citizen. The law was designed to protect the government of the United States against charges of violating its neutrality, in that it gave the government the power to prosecute the usual types of recruiting. The case of Citizen Genet is basic to a comprehension of this purpose; and the third study in this group, the case of the British minister Crampton in 1855, suggests some of the refinements in the matter of interpreting the law.

The Crampton case is the precedent for studying later instances in which men were encouraged to leave the United States with the intention of participating in a foreign war. The World War of 1914-1918 furnishes no known instance of a violation of American neutrality in this respect. Americans enlisted in the armed forces of the Allies by the hundreds before the United States itself entered the war, but they did so voluntarily and without solicitation on the part of any belligerent government. The presence of military reservists in the United States from the several European countries which practiced conscription did create a new situation. But when these persons were summoned home by their governments, the State Department refused to interpret the summonses as recruiting. It recognized no obligation to intern reservists who owed allegiance to a belligerent government. The Spanish Civil War of 1936-37 attracted a number of volunteers from this country; and there were rumors that the passage money of these men was provided for them. According to the Crampton

case this practice might be considered a violation of American neutrality, but the manner and extent to which it was carried on, if at all, were kept concealed. Until the exact facts are known it would be impossible to say whether there had been a violation of the statute or not. The point is that, when men wish to volunteer, ways may be found of getting them to their destination without technically infringing the law.

The neutrality laws of 1938 and 1939 virtually went the limit in denying to a citizen his right of voluntary expatriation with the intention of enlisting abroad. This prohibition was a detail among the mass of rules set up under the theory that there "ought to be a law" to keep the country out of war; and it failed to daunt certain bold spirits who felt, as their fathers had felt in 1915, that the Allies were "fighting our war." The rapid alteration in the country's viewpoint in 1940 in fact showed that this prohibition was the emptiest of threats, and under the Lend-Lease Act of March 1941 the training facilities of the United States, particularly its air fields, were opened to the enlisted men of the United Nations. Technically the rule against foreign recruiting on American soil still prevailed, as long as the United States remained a "neutral"; but the circumstances of the second great world conflict would seem to have rendered it a complete anomaly.

Historically quite different, and yet analogous to this problem of foreign enlistment, were questions raised when Americans "colonized" a foreign country with the intention of joining in or even of originating a revolution. The instances were so numerous in the nineteenth century, and so symptomatic of the spirit of Manifest Destiny, that it is impracticable to give them separate treatment in this book. We recall, for instance, that such a movement took place into West Florida after 1806 with a deliberate intention of detaching the country from Spanish rule, and that the authorities in Washington secretly encouraged the move. That the settlers intended to become permanent residents of West Florida is true; that they also intended to overthrow the constituted authority is likewise true.

The revolution in Texas offers as exact a case as we have in which an armed uprising in a neighboring country involved the neutrality laws of the United States. It is an outstanding illustration of how the law against foreign enlistment was effectively evaded, while the government continued to maintain a correct attitude. A very similar situation arose shortly after in the case of the Canadian Rebellion of 1837, in which recruiting for the insurgents proceeded openly along the border. In this instance, however, the Federal

authorities, for reasons of policy, appear to have been more earnest in stamping out recruiting.

Belonging in a class by themselves, and yet interrelated with the instances described above, were the filibustering expeditions of the middle of the nineteenth century. These were warlike attempts on the weak Latin neighbors of the United States by private bands bent on conquest or annexation. We remember them particularly in connection with Central America and Cuba, and we recognize them as part of the stuff of Manifest Destiny.¹ The two principal filibuster leaders were Narciso López and William Walker. López' forays against Cuba present no particular problem. They were planned and organized on American soil, and the vessels bearing the men eluded the revenue cutters stationed in the harbor to watch them. This was the only attempt to stop the expeditions. The government made no effort to arrest the recruiting, which was done openly.

Walker's adventures in Nicaragua were easily the most ambitious filibustering project of the period. For a short while the little gray-eyed chieftain from Marysville, California, made himself military master of that republic and dreamed of conquering the remaining Central American states and then annexing Cuba. It was to be a personal empire, ruled from Granada and peopled with American stock, with the native races reduced to the status of slaves or serfs. Sympathizers of Walker in the United States imagined him to be the advance agent of annexation; but Walker himself had no such intentions. The American administration made somewhat more elaborate attempts to intercept filibusters who flocked to his aid than it did in the case of López, but it had scanty success. Walker and his original band of fifty-eight "Immortals" had no trouble, in May 1855, in getting away from San Francisco, where the expedition was openly advertised. After he had landed in Nicaragua, the Accessory Transit Company of New York, which owned the road across the Isthmus and controlled the transit business, subsidized him and furnished him with reinforcements. The recruits were secured in the usual manner chiefly in New York and New Orleans, and transported free of charge to Nicaragua. The government made ineffective attempts to interfere with the recruiting, and it sometimes stopped and searched the company's vessels before they got away from the harbor. But it apprehended very few filibusters indeed. There was no way of telling them apart from the regular passengers bound for San Francisco, or from persons going as

¹ Chapters 10 and 38, above, pp. 141-56 and 603-10

"laborers" to work in Greytown. The company found it easy to conceal the filibusters among the rest of the crowd

It was Cornelius Vanderbilt, the president of the company and the man who made Walker, who also destroyed him by the simple expedient of stopping the flow of recruits. To save himself from being overwhelmed by his enemies Walker surrendered at Greytown to a naval officer of the United States. Placed under temporary arrest after his return, he was soon released because the administration decided it would stand no chance of success with juries in the South, where Walker was popular. Walker escaped again from Mobile in November 1857, made a landing at Greytown, but was surrounded by a force of American sailors disembarked for the purpose by Commodore Paulding. For this "violation" of Nicaraguan sovereignty Buchanan censured Paulding and retired him from his command. Walker went free and escaped a third time. Buchanan's instructions to Paulding's successor are a study in Executive humor. The officer was to stay in the harbor of Greytown, but was to stop filibusters only on the high seas! There were Congressmen who insisted that Walker be returned to Nicaragua on a warship because Paulding had "insulted" that country, and popular opinion divided between the defenders of Paulding and the partisans of Walker. The course taken by Buchanan indicates which side that cautious politician feared the more

As might be supposed, Walker was the never-say-die type of filibuster. His last venture was an attempt to invade Honduras, but a British warship intercepted him off the Honduran coast in 1860 and the local authorities honored him with a firing squad. American filibustering expired with the outbreak of the Civil War, but another form of unneutral activity gained considerable notoriety in the succeeding decade in connection with the insurrection in Cuba. The government did a far more creditable performance in suppressing these conspiracies, but they continued to flourish and receive popular favor none the less.

The following three case studies have been selected as basic illustrations of the foreign enlistment problem. (1) The Case of Citizen Genet, 1793; (2) Recruiting for the Texas Revolution, 1835-1837; (3) The Case of John F. Crampton 1855.

CHAPTER 46

THE CASE OF CITIZEN GENET, 1793

EDMOND CHARLES, Citizen Genet, a young, attractive bachelor of thirty, was already a man of reputation when he disembarked at Charleston, South Carolina, on April 8, 1793. His mentor had been Madame Roland, and he had proved his brilliance as a translator in the foreign office of Louis XVI and his missionary zeal as a Republican by getting himself expelled from the court of Catherine of Russia.

The little group of Girondins who beheaded Louis XVI and cradled the first French Republic had fairly well-formed ideas of what they wanted from Genet's mission. The Americans with whom they had dealings in Paris—among others, Joel Barlow, the Yankee poet, and James Monroe, the American minister—were all ardent Republicans, opposed to England as symbolic of the old order of monarchy and oppression. From the United States the French Republic expected *benevolent* neutrality and liberal interpretation of the two treaties of 1778 in favor of the French cause: freedom to fit out French privateers and ships of war, to enlist recruits in American ports, to use those ports as rendezvous, and to allow French consuls to condemn as prizes British and other merchantmen against whose governments the crusading French Republic was waging war. France also desired the United States to connive at the initiation of fighting expeditions by land against Spanish and British territory on the south, west, and north, and she seems to have expected the United States to accept its reward as silent partner in these enterprises by taking over the two Floridas, and perhaps part of British Canada, leaving New Orleans and Louisiana to France.

There was little that was unreasonable about these assumptions on the part of the French. In Paris James Monroe, the American minister, had in 1792 before the National Convention referred formally to France as "our ally and friend." In America the populace appeared to be more spontaneously favorable to the French Revolution than it had ever been to its own. The great French revolutionary triumph over the Austrians and Prussians at Valmy in October 1792 was followed by the appearance of red liberty caps

and cockades everywhere throughout America. Civic feasts throughout New England celebrated news of the battle, and everywhere the friends of France, Liberty, and Equality proved their loyalty by forcing the adopting of "Citizen" and "Citess" as terms of address in place of the aristocratic "Mr" and "Mrs."

The situation in the American trans-Allegheny West was also ripe for action. Among the natural leaders of the frontiersmen, Dr. James O'Fallon and his friend George Rogers Clark, both of them veterans of the Revolution, possessed no confidence in the future of the United States and had already made gestures toward Spain for protection. O'Fallon had tried in 1790-91 to colonize the land between the south bank of the Yazoo River and the town of Natchez with Americans, but had appealed to the Spanish governor at New Orleans for support. Clark, ruined financially by the Revolution, had also appealed to Spain to support him in establishing a colony in Spanish Louisiana opposite the mouth of the Ohio. These men assumed that the future of the Mississippi and Ohio valleys lay in the hand of Spain, who controlled the mouth, rather than the United States. They planned independent colonies allied to and dependent upon Spain. When France reappeared in 1793 as an aggressive, conquering power in the American West, able to aid and give protection, they immediately prepared to throw in their lot with her. It was O'Fallon who visited Genet at Charleston and procured a French commission for his friend Clark to organize and lead an armed band of Kentuckians to capture New Orleans and the Louisiana territory in the name of France.

Genet disembarked at Charleston on the eighth of April 1793 from the deck of the French frigate, "L'Embuscade." Whether the choice of this southern town, close to the Spanish frontier and to the British sea lanes to the West Indies, rather than Philadelphia, the capital of the United States, was involuntary—the result of strong winds which blew the vessel from her course—or whether it was predetermined by Genet can only be surmised. Whether Genet intended, moreover, first to consult with the constituted American federal authorities, as his instruction implied he should, or whether he had determined, while still on the high seas, to conduct himself as a missionary from revolutionary France to the *people* of America may again be relegated to the museum of unsolved historical puzzles. The fact is that throughout the whole of his mission, but especially during his protracted stay in Charleston and the subsequent journey overland by way of the back country, he behaved primarily as an apostle to the people and not as a diplomatic agent accredited to the

American government. In Charleston, he expostulated later to Jefferson, he found himself "surrounded by Frenchmen full of zeal for their country, pressing for authority to arm with their own means . . . They would fit out their own vessels, provide everything, man them, and only ask a commission from him "

The sojourn of eleven days in Charleston was the most fruitful part of Genet's mission. He had brought upwards of three hundred blank commissions from Paris to be given to any French or American skippers who would fit out privateers. Four privateers left Charleston within a week bearing his commission and returned in due course with captured British merchantmen in their wake. Here no unwelcome interference from the federal authorities was thrust upon the French emissary. William Moultrie, the governor of South Carolina, proved both hospitable and helpful in making suggestions, and it was at Charleston that the plans for the conquest of the Spanish Southwest were put in motion. This was by far the most important object of Genet's mission, for it embraced the revival of a strong French colonial empire in the American hinterland and along the fringes of the Gulf of Mexico, to be consummated with the aid of dissatisfied American frontiersmen. France would in the future be both the spiritual and the material protector of the latter, and the United States would be restored to its position in the French constellation which it had held during the Revolutionary War, the junior partner of France in the crusade for Liberty and the bulwark of defense for the French American empire against the British. Thus a *family compact* would spring up between the two republics, the United States to profit from it by being allowed to take the two Floridas and British Canada, but France to keep New Orleans and Louisiana and become the "Liberator" of the Spanish colonies in South America.

The plan for this activity was drafted in Paris. The American government was to be asked to co-operate, but, if it declined, Genet was to work it out with the assistance of private agents. The latter were to be sent to Kentucky and the Ohio River settlements to promise free navigation of the Mississippi as a reward for their assistance.

As it happened, Genet chose to set these plans in motion before leaving Charleston. George Rogers Clark was given his commission to recruit "1,500 brave men or thereabouts" to go down the river and co-operate with a second expedition under the leadership of William Tate, which was to go west from Charleston through the country of the Choctaws and Cherokees and meet Clark at the mouth

of the Tennessee. A third expedition was to go south through Georgia, led by Samuel Hammond, and overthrow the Spaniards in St. Augustine. Mangourit, the French consul in Charleston, was left to perfect the details of these expeditions.

His mission thus supported, Genet left Charleston for Philadelphia, going through the upland back country and everywhere enthusiastically greeting, and being greeted by, the frontier farmers. His journey, taking twenty-eight days when it might have consumed but three, was a sort of a triumphant procession of Liberty. At each town he tarried for the feast that was prepared for him. Genet had reason to believe his mission would be wholly successful. Nothing that he saw contradicted the impression that these yeoman citizenry of the American South and West would espouse the cause of France as the arbiter of the New World as soon as circumstances warranted a move to advance it.

Genet's first setback, a slight one, occurred at Fredericksburg, Virginia, where he learned that on April 22, 1793, the administration of President Washington had issued a proclamation announcing its determination to maintain a conduct "friendly and impartial" toward both sides in the existing war. Although the proclamation warned American citizens in a general way to avoid committing acts contrary to this attitude, nevertheless it contained few teeth other than the implied warning that the Executive would prosecute offenders and seek to secure a judgment against them from the courts. No statute existed in 1793 forbidding American citizens to enlist in the forces of foreign countries at war, or otherwise defining the obligations and conditions of American neutrality. The proclamation rested wholly upon the precedents of the law of nations and upon what the courts of the land would permit the administration to do in order to enforce it.

The implications of this famous proclamation are to be found in the formal communications which presently passed from Thomas Jefferson, the Secretary of State, to Genet and to Gouverneur Morris, who was about to replace Monroe as American minister at Paris. "It is the *right* of every nation," Jefferson announced to Genet, "to prohibit acts of sovereignty from being exercised by any other within its limits; and the *duty* of a neutral nation to prohibit such as would injure one of the warring powers." He continued:

No succor should be given to either belligerent unless stipulated by treaty, in men, arms or anything else directly serving for war. . . . No citizen has a right to go to war of his own authority; and for what he does without right he ought to be punished. . . . Nothing can be more obviously

absurd than to say, that all the citizens may be at war and yet the nation at peace. . . .¹

These dicta received specific application in the additional announcement that the granting of military commissions and the raising of troops within the United States were among the rights of sovereignty and could not be granted to any foreign power. They extended also to the arming or equipping of privateers or other vessels within the ports of the United States to cruise against nations with whom the United States was at peace, and the *addition* of any military equipment to vessels of either belligerent in American ports.

As we have seen, Jefferson, in thus formulating a neutrality *policy*, was simply reiterating the advice of Vattel, the Swiss writer who, in 1758, had been the first publicist to read a full meaning into the *international* law of neutrality. Vattel not only enjoined against the enlistment of troops or equipping of vessels by one government on the soil of another, but recommended that any agent of a belligerent that did so should be hanged, whether he was acting under orders or not.

Jefferson went on to define, for the purpose of the existing neutrality, what was meant to be the limit of American territory off shore. As he wrote, "the right of protection within its waters and to a reasonable distance on its coasts, has been acknowledged by every nation, and denied to none." For the present, American jurisdiction off shore would be limited to "the utmost range of a cannon ball"—that is, three geographical miles.²

Such was the policy of neutrality as set forth by the Executive of the United States between May and August, 1793, in a series of diplomatic communications. It rested solely upon international law and possessed no statutory sanction from Congress. Furthermore, no such sanction was considered at the time. The complaints of French violations which the British minister, George Hammond, made to the State Department were in no small measure responsible for the activity of the administration. A memorial from him to the Secretary of State, dated May 8, 1793, detailing Genet's conduct in Charleston, aroused the government to the seriousness of the situation.

¹ *American State Papers, Foreign Relations*, Vol. I, p. 150. See also Oscar Hallam, "Citizen Genet, His Contribution to International Law," *American Law Review*, LI (1917), 321-44.

² Chesapeake and Delaware bays, the distance from headland to headland of which was in excess of six miles, were also included at this time exclusively within American territorial jurisdiction.

The practical issues in this first American neutrality case can, of course, be most clearly seen in the challenges which Citizen Genet and his fellow agents directed against it. Apparently the sole immediate effect of Washington's proclamation was to draw fire from the Frenchman's explosive nature. His protests were loud against this demonstration of the government's hostility to the cause of Liberty, his actions were scarcely less ostentatious in the manner in which they ignored the warning.

Genet did not, however, regard himself as a deliberate or frivolous violator of the sovereignty of the United States. His concept of neutrality contrasted seriously with that of Washington, nevertheless it had weight, and was unquestionably supported by a large number, if not a majority, of the American *people* and by numerous important public officials. Jefferson himself, indoctrinated as he had been during his past years with the dogmas of revolution, was none too discreet at first in the distinctions he made between neutrality and unneutrality. Where he believed that he perceived an American advantage in the latter, he was ready to pursue it. For instance, as a private individual divesting himself temporarily of the obligations of his office, he made himself somewhat privy to the French schemes for attack upon Spanish territory. He listened to Genet's narrative of the plans of General Clark; he wrote a letter of recommendation to the governor of Kentucky for André Michaux, the agent named by Genet to carry the necessary money to Clark, introducing Michaux as a botanist; and in his official capacity he limited himself to warning Genet not to organize hostile expeditions *inside* American territory. This appears to have been a quibble, for it was the plan of French agents actually to mobilize these expeditions outside of the border. Clark, for instance, was to start down the Mississippi from a point on the *west* bank of the river, that is, on Spanish soil. All the preparations, however, and the recruiting were to be accomplished, of course, on the east bank of the river, which was American territory.

Genet's idea of American neutrality was derived from the contemporary Continental European practice of *benevolent* neutrality, and from a liberal interpretation of the two treaties of 1778 between France and the United States.³ He anticipated no difficulties in

³ Article 11 of the Treaty of Alliance (February 6, 1778) "guaranteed forever," on the part of the United States, "the possessions of the Crown of France in America." Article 17 of the Treaty of Amity and Commerce (January 17, 1778) stipulated that in case either of the parties was at war, its privateers and ships of war should have the right to carry into the ports of the other any prizes which they might take from the enemy, such prizes to be free from arrest, seizure, search, duties, and ex-

getting effective assistance from this country as a benevolent neutral. Neither apparently did the Girondist leaders in Paris who sent him. It was the cool heads of Washington's cabinet, acting upon a conception of American national interest, that decided otherwise.

Genet nevertheless found ample support among the people for his cause—support so virile that it practically nullified the intentions of nonpartisanship on the part of the Cabinet. The masses in fact were actively on Genet's side and demanded in effect benevolent neutrality. France was the Liberator in a war for Freedom and Republicanism, and England and her monarchical allies were the wanton enemies and aggressors.

We have observed how enthusiastically the people of the South rallied to Genet. Yet nowhere did he get warmer support than in Philadelphia, the capital of the United States. The state officers of Pennsylvania, from Governor Mifflin down to the captains and sergeants in the militia, were heartily in his favor. And it was on the authority of the state governments that the government of the United States had chiefly to rely for the enforcement of neutrality.

amination concerning the lawfulness of their capture, and such ships to have the right at all times to hoist sail and depart with their prizes.

Article 21 of the same treaty forbade the subjects of either party to take commissions as privateers from the enemy of the other. Article 22 stated that enemy privateers should not be allowed to be fitted out, or to sell their prizes in the ports of either party, nor to purchase victuals there.

These two treaties were drawn to suit the designs of France, at the time a *benevolent neutral* in the American War of Independence. They did not suit the interests of the United States, as perceived by the Washington administration, in 1793. These were for strict, that is, *impartial* neutrality.

The American government was able to avoid the commitments of these treaties favorably in 1793, first because France did not invoke the *casus foederis* of the treaty of alliance and demand that the United States share defense of the French West Indies, and second because it applied a strict interpretation to the Treaty of Amity and Commerce. While the latter permitted French war vessels to bring their prizes into American territorial waters, it did *not* allow French officials to institute legal proceedings against them on American soil. A captured enemy vessel was not, of course, a good prize until it had been lawfully condemned by a properly constituted prize court, and a French prize court functioning within an American jurisdiction would be a usurpation of American sovereign rights.

Articles 21 and 22 of the Treaty of Amity and Commerce were negative in character, not permissive. They forbade Americans to take service in or to assist *British* privateers, but they conferred no permission upon American citizens to engage as French privateers. Genet, on his part, expected to make use of this treaty in order to effectuate the benevolent neutrality of this country. As such it would be more helpful to France than as a partner in arms. But the Washington administration pointed out that the treaty carried nothing by implication. Presumably, however, if American national interests stood to benefit by this type of indirect aid to France, it would have been easy for the government to interpret the treaty as Monsieur Genet desired. The United States would then have become the *ally* of France for the domination of the Western Hemisphere.

Taking note of this, Genet undertook to carry an "appeal to the people" over Washington's head, influencing them to elect a Congress favorable to the French cause. He even wrote Washington that Congress and not the Executive should determine the character of American neutrality and should therefore be summoned in extraordinary session. Had Congress in fact been currently in session during the summer months of 1793, it can only be conjectured what kind of a neutrality law it would have insisted on drafting.

An example of the government's difficulties can be seen in the results of the test suit against one Gideon Henfield which was brought in the Federal District Court at Philadelphia. American citizens, as well as Frenchmen, enlisted freely on privateers under the French flag. Henfield had taken service on the privateer "Citizen Genet" at Charleston and been arrested on a common law charge of disturbing the peace of the United States. In its brief the government asseverated that it was its duty to prevent enlistments under treaties which it had with three powers now at war with France. In these treaties it was stipulated that there should be peace between their subjects and American citizens. While the judge, in charging the jury, found in favor of the government, the jury nevertheless acquitted Henfield. Genet regarded the verdict as a triumph and continued to make enlistments, although under increasing difficulties.

Preparations for armed expeditions against the Spanish Southwest continued, and were not broken up until December 1793. Had Genet been successful in forwarding the necessary funds, these expeditions might easily have made their escape. In the meantime privateers continued to quit the harbors at Charleston, Philadelphia, Boston, and other American ports without interference. In August a privateer captured a British fishing vessel just outside the harbor of Boston, and the French consul resisted efforts to arrest her by having the captured prize moored alongside a French man-of-war. French privateers regularly brought their prizes into port from April through August for condemnation proceedings by French consuls. Through fear of reprisals from France, Washington decided not to restore the captured vessels to their British owners but to pay compensation instead. In 1797 a mixed commission set up under Jay's Treaty awarded England the sum of \$143,428.14 in payment for all prizes condemned by French agents on American soil or captured by French craft in American territorial waters.

The American government's worst difficulties were solved by the month of August, but not until the very end of the year was it able to convince Genet that he was an envoy and not a missionary.

CHAPTER 47

RECRUITING FOR THE TEXAN
REVOLUTION, 1835-1837

IN THE AUTUMN of 1835 the American population of Texas broke the thin strands that legally bound them to Mexico. They outnumbered the Mexican population by more than two to one having rapidly colonized the country around San Antonio under the liberal land grant policy of the Mexican government. They constituted the sole ruling element in Texas and had no actual ties with Mexico City. Independence was their goal and not, so far as is known, annexation to the United States. The principal outlet for their trade, however, had long been New Orleans. This consideration and their close cultural affinity with the American people impelled them to seek succor across the border. Recruits, money, and supplies were needed in large quantities for them to cope with the trained army which General Santa Ana, the Mexican leader, proposed to hurl against them.

Less reticent even than the French Girondins of 1793, the Texan leaders made no effort to conceal their plans to gain help from the United States. The revolution was not two weeks old when they issued a public appeal to the people across the border. They proffered large cash bounties and liberal gifts of land, which they made known through an advertising campaign in the American press. "Let each man come with a good rifle and one hundred rounds of ammunition, and come soon," admonished General Houston.

Three commissioners, including Texas' First Citizen, Stephen Austin, soon arrived in New Orleans and began a tour of the country which carried them east to Philadelphia and the other large coast cities. They carried instructions to negotiate a million-dollar loan, fit out a navy, obtain men and supplies for the army, and solicit donations. They proved to be merely the first of many who came to garner recruits and solicit subscriptions. No attempt at secrecy was made. The newspapers gave them an enthusiastic reception and helped advise prospective recruits how to get to Texas without running afoul of the law. "Be cautious in conversation," a Mississippi editor counseled. Men could journey to Texas with arms in their hands either singly or in bands, if they did not boast of their intentions. If they joined the Texan army upon arrival, that was

their affair. As a New Orleans paper pointed out, the law did not "mean to prevent any citizen from taking passage in *any* merchant vessel, to go *anywhere*, and with *any intent*, and with arms and munitions of war."

The Texans spread their appeal broadly, aiming to kindle the crusading spirit of democracy as well as to whet the general appetite for land. "Our cause," they proclaimed, "is that of Liberty, Religious Toleration and Freedom of Conscience against Usurpation, Despotism and the Unnatural and Unholy Monopolies of the Church of Rome." The Western pioneers and farmers, already equipped with their own rifles and on the watch for fresh lands, responded most readily. Thousands heard the call. Some went directly west across the frontier, but the majority traveled via the Mississippi and New Orleans. Six companies passed through this port before the close of the year, including the band of Natchez "Fencibles" captained by John A. Quitman of Mississippi, who as governor of his state at a later date helped finance the Cuban filibustering expeditions of Narciso López. At the river landings along the route the "emigrant" bands, their "drums beating and fifes playing," received the cheers of the people.

From the Eastern cities the Texans experienced little difficulty in raising the subscriptions for the loans they needed. "In credit, loans, and donations," writes Ernest C. Barker, the principal historian of the revolution, "the Texans drew their financial support almost entirely from the United States." None of these forms of aid, it may be said, were within the conception of the Neutrality Act of 1818. But the Texans also distributed military commissions, and at New Orleans they armed and fitted out the ship "Brutus" for service in their "navy"—a precedent that the British government might have used with effect thirty-five years later when it was summoned to defend itself for permitting the escape of the "Alabama" and her sister commerce-destroyers.

Washington's administration, it will be recalled, dealt with Genet on the basis of the law of nations and the common law. Jackson in this case had the Neutrality Act of 1818 to apply, and he went through the correct form by solemnly charging the federal district attorneys to be on the watch for all violations of the law. The Act forbade the hiring or retaining of men and the arming, fitting out, or departure of any hostile expedition against the territory of a friendly state. The district attorneys, however, thoroughly understood the humor of the situation and everywhere upheld the fiction that emigration in this case was not the same thing as engaging in

a hostile expedition. When a band appeared in Mississippi with fire and drum, the district attorney gravely reported that he saw nothing which "exhibited them as an armed force"! At Nashville the district attorney was believed to be raising a company himself "He says," so ran the gossip, "he will prosecute any man under his command who will take up arms *here*, and he will accompany them [*sic*] to the boundary line of the U. S. to see that they shall *not violate her Neutrality* and when there, if the boys think proper to step over the line as peaceable Emigrants his authority in this Govt. will cease and he thinks it highly probable that he will take a peep at Texas himself." Such was the extent of governmental enforcement of neutrality in the Texan revolution

CHAPTER 48

THE CASE OF JOHN F. CRAMPTON, 1855

ONE OF THE STRANGEST, most sensational and yet baffling experiences with foreign recruiting in the United States occurred in the year 1855, when the Crimean war between England and Russia was in full progress. Mr. John F. Crampton, head of the British legation at Washington with nearly ten years of experience in America behind him, was the central figure. Three British consuls, two on the east coast and one in Cincinnati, and a distinguished Nova Scotian, Mr. Joseph Howe, were his partners in crime. Mr. Howe held no official position, though his public career in Nova Scotia had already stamped him as one of the ablest men of Canada.

At that time men were still hired to fight much as they were hired for any other job—by an offer of pecuniary reward. With reports of a demoralized and defeated army reaching it from the Crimea during the winter of 1854–55, the British government faced the serious problem of getting fresh recruits as speedily as possible. We may at the outset acquit it of any intention to violate American neutrality—it expressly commanded Mr. Crampton not to do so. Nevertheless it urged him to make himself the center of a publicity campaign in the United States, the details of which were to be worked out on this side of the water. Crampton was put in an unenviable position. His patriotism was appealed to, yet as the responsible representative of his country in America he could not afford to vio-

late American law knowingly. What he was to do, if such a thing could be accomplished, was to get recruits but stay within the law. More embarrassing still, he received gratuitous advice and assistance from men like Howe, who shared his patriotism but not his official responsibility. The ensuing experiment furnished an ideal opportunity of discovering the meaning of the law against recruiting, for in this instance the American government had every motive for being on the alert.

To all appearances there was no lack of idle fellows in America ready to join the British army and claim the \$30 bounty and \$8 per month wage, just as they were swarming by the hundreds around the filibuster leaders of the time. Word of the proposed British foreign legion got about without any prompting from Crampton, and the British legation was fairly plagued by importunate and needy ex-soldiers of fortune from Germany, Schleswig-Holstein, Denmark, and Poland who had found their way to this country. Sensing the possibility of a commission in the British army, these mercenaries were profuse in their efforts to raise (and command) regiments of their own. One very droll offer came from Tennessee to "raise and march a division of 6000 men to the various ports in the United States," the cost to be defrayed by a deposit of a million and a half dollars furnished by the British legation. Even the imaginations of the filibusters did not reach such heights. Other adventurers, impatient with Crampton's reserve toward them, decided to act. One enterprising Scotsman set up a recruiting office in New York, advertised in the newspapers, and distributed handbills offering to help meet the cost of the fare to Halifax. But the crowning inspiration came from Joseph Howe, who came down from Nova Scotia in March to take charge. Howe had the blessing of Sir Gaspard Le Marchant, the governor of Nova Scotia, but he behaved principally as a free lance.

The result of all this was that Crampton was drawn, rather against his own better judgment into making plans and supplying the funds. He convinced himself that the thing could be done without breaking the law, and he hoped that in assuming the lead he would be able to keep it under control. The consequence was tragic: his name became linked with those of the most unscrupulous adventurers, who, when the opportunity arose, did not hesitate to sell him out. Probably more vicious than most of them was one Henry Hertz of Philadelphia. Howe described him as "one of the greatest rascals that I ever met"; yet the patriotic Nova Scotian was rash enough to strike a bargain with him. "[He] may be useful and must

be tried," Howe confided, "but I think he is a lineal descendant of the Jew who sold his Saviour for 30 pieces of silver, and for 30 pieces of gold this rascal would sell the whole British Army"¹ Crampton's experience with this scoundrel more than justified the prophecy.

The technique worked out was as follows. Money was supplied to individual adventurers who were more or less typified by Hertz, boasters one and all, rascals some. For a while Howe acted as go-between, but thereafter Crampton himself had direct dealings with them. No written agreement was made with them, but they were expected to use the money to defray the expenses of prospective recruits from their homes to the recruiting depots in Canada. The manner in which the money was actually spent can only be left to the imagination. The agents soon learned to make frequent demands for fresh funds. Howe tried to protect himself against this sort of malfeasance by issuing cards marked "N. S. R." which might mean either "Nova Scotia Regiment" or "Nova Scotia Railroad." The cards served as passes on the ships which carried the men from New York to Halifax, and since there was a doubt about their meaning they also served as a protection against conviction for violating the law.

This procedure was followed for several months, mostly in the seaports. It was almost sterile in results. Several hundred men were shipped to Halifax, but the British authorities had no hold on them after they got there. Some took literal advantage of Mr. Howe's cards and obtained employment on the Nova Scotia Railroad. Others got in touch with an Irish society which tried to make out that they were being trapped into joining the British army. The whole enterprise proved to be an incredible, though very human piece of folly, for which Mr. Crampton was singled out as the scapegoat.

At first the American federal authorities looked upon this activity with indulgence. They arrested a number of the private adventurers, but made no attempt to link the latter with their British principals. But after five months the Secretary of State, William L. Marcy, became convinced that the British legation was the center of a conspiracy, and he made demands accordingly on the British government. The practical phases of the issue were terminated in August, when Crampton belatedly liquidated the recruiting campaign. Its most serious consequences were yet to come.

That there was a reasonable doubt, however, as to what neu-

¹ Quoted from J. B. Brebner, "Joseph Howe and the Crimean War Enlistment Controversy between Great Britain and the United States," *Canadian Historical Review*, XI (1930), 311.

trality meant with reference to recruiting may be easily demonstrated by pointing to the contrasting opinions of a federal judge in Philadelphia who was twice called upon to make a ruling in the matter. The Neutrality Act forbade the *hiring* or *retaining* of another person to leave the jurisdiction of the United States with *intent* to be enlisted in the service of another state. Were the dissemination of information and the payment of passage money within the meaning of the italicized words? In May 1855 Judge Kane decided that they were not. In September, apparently with more facts at his command, he decided in the exact opposite sense. What was legal while the campaign was actually in progress was illegal after it was all over.

These court cases, of course, had no direct bearing upon the diplomatic phases of the issue. The former involved private individuals. The American government was perfectly within its rights, under international law, in putting its own interpretation upon neutrality so far as its own course of conduct was concerned. It was not bound, in its relations with a foreign government, to follow the dictum of a court. It possessed the *sovereign* right to say whether any sort of recruiting should go on under its jurisdiction. Caleb Cushing, the Attorney General, expressed this view as follows.

In truth, the statute in this matter is of but secondary account. The main consideration is the sovereign right of the United States to exercise complete and exclusive jurisdiction within their own territory; to remain strictly neutral, if they please, . . . All which it concerns a foreign Government to know is, whether we, as a Government, permit such enlistments . . . It has no business to inquire whether there be statutes on the subject or not. Least of all has it the right to take notice of the statutes, only to see how it may devise means by which to evade them. Instead of this, it is bound . . . to respect the sovereignty and regard the public policy of the United States.²

The American government pursued the matter from that angle. It demanded of the British government that it disavow Crampton and recall him. The British government, which had been kept reasonably well informed by Crampton of what was going on but which did nothing to prevent it until it was too late, thus could not honorably repudiate him. Near the end of May 1856 Crampton was expelled from Washington. Much public passion was generated during the controversy, which lasted almost a year and which during that time assumed the proportions of a first-class diplomatic incident. Irish societies aided gratuitously in fixing the spotlight on

² *United States Documents*, Serial No. 819, Doc. 35, p. 74

hapless British consuls, who also were expelled from the country; and Franklin Pierce chose the particular date, May 28, for the act of expulsion because it was the day before the opening of the Democratic party convention for nominating a candidate for President. If, however, he hoped to win the party's acclaim for such a bold deed, he was sadly disappointed.

The administration also unfortunately attempted to dramatize its case against Crampton as means of advancing its expansionist policies in Central America. By waving the threat of war in Great Britain's face it hoped to induce the latter to withdraw its interests from Central America. This, however, proved to be a piece of incompetent and short-sighted diplomacy: no results ensued. The American government's conduct toward Crampton, regarded from the standpoint of drawing an issue on its neutrality rights, was above reproach; its attempt to use the issue as an instrument of intimidation abroad and political advantage at home was a patent failure.

IMPRESSMENT AND THE RIGHT OF SEARCH

THE BRITISH PRACTICE of impressing seamen, so decisive in exciting American hatred in the early years of the nineteenth century, stamped the belligerent right of search with a peculiarly sinister character. The right has to be associated, however, with the general problem of a belligerent's interference with neutral commerce, a subject reserved for treatment in the final group of chapters in this volume. Furthermore, it must be correlated with peace-time questions of policing the seas, questions which were given attention in the section on "Freedom of the Seas" in Part I.

The belligerent right of search, as it affected persons on board neutral vessels, is the subject of the following case studies: (1) Impressment of Seamen, 1793-1812; (2) The "Trent" Affair, 1861; (3) The Case of the Steamship "China," 1916

CHAPTER 49

IMPRESSMENT OF SEAMEN, 1793-1812

AS A BURNING ISSUE in American diplomacy impressment of seamen characterized the wars of the French Revolution and Napoleon. It was born of conditions peculiar to that time; and though it never recurred, it formed the basis for several interesting situations between Great Britain and the United States in later wars. Heartless though it seems to the modern mind, impressment was the accepted form of recruiting in the eighteenth century. Voluntary enlistment was almost entirely unknown, and the press gang on land and the boarding party at sea were trusted to fill the depleted ranks of the British army and navy in time of war. It was the ruthless, tyrannical methods of these petty gangs in preying upon unsuspecting

victims, and not the legal principle upon which they functioned, that are in fact open to condemnation. Military conscription—the right of the state to muster its subjects to its defense—is of course today a fully recognized prerogative of the sovereign. At that time it had a peculiar significance in British law in that a British subject could not legally change his allegiance. He was duty-bound to the King regardless of where he happened to be. There is no record of an attempt to enforce this rule of inalienable allegiance on land belonging to the United States; impressment of sailors by British agents was, nevertheless, of frequent occurrence on the high seas and in British ports. Its exercise was considered a perfectly lawful function of the belligerent right of search, being put broadly by George Grenville, the British minister for foreign affairs in 1796, as follows:

It appears perfectly clear that the belligerent has a right to visit neutral vessels upon the high seas to take therefrom all goods belonging to such subjects of the enemy . . . and to take the subjects of the enemy, found on board, as prisoners of war—it has also the right to take its own subjects found on board of a foreign vessel on the high seas, for all the purposes for which they are liable to be taken by any act of its legal power and discretion . . .¹

It is important to bear in mind this threefold classification of Grenville—enemy goods, enemy subjects, and one's own subjects. With the addition of neutral goods which are contraband of war it forms a complete description of what Great Britain includes in the belligerent right of search. But the statement was also important for its deliberate omission: there was no claim on the part of the British government over neutral *persons*. It was never intended that an American citizen, seaman or otherwise, should be mustered into the British service, whether he was on English or foreign soil or on a ship on the high seas. In fine, the diplomatic issue with the United States turned on two points: (1) the complete immunity from search at sea that the United States claimed for its vessels, and (2) the outrageously numerous mistakes that British press gangs made both on land and sea in victimizing genuine American citizens. Inseparable from the latter was the simple but difficult question what was an American citizen. The records of the impressment cases show that, even after exhaustive investigation into the status and birth of many victims, the two governments were unable to agree on their citizenship.

¹ Quoted from J. F. Zimmerman, *Impressment of American Seamen* (Columbia University Studies in History, Economics and Public Law, New York, 1925), CXVIII, 50.

It was the underlying circumstances of the time, however, rather than the differences of the two governments over the law, that stamped the impressment issues as unique. Desertion was a common occurrence in those days. If British mariners deserted their ships for double the pay on American vessels, there were times when American seamen were tempted to desert ship while in a British port to claim the £5 bounty for entering the King's service. Then, too, if an American master in a British port saw an opportunity to hire a British crew at half the price he was paying his fellow citizens, he was by no means above cutting the latter adrift. It was a hard and pitiless practice on both sides. The American merchant marine was the greatest carrier of the wars, swelling under the continuous demand for its services from both British and French shippers. American vessels were everywhere on the sea lanes and in the ports of the world. For nearly half the period they did the West Indian business of the French. They assisted British merchants in marketing British goods on the Continent in defiance of the Continental System. And of course they were an indispensable medium in the large foreign and coasting trade of the United States.

The most prosperous years for the American merchant marine were from 1803 to 1807, when seventy thousand tons of new shipping went into service each year. To man the new ships four thousand new seamen were needed every year, for the supply of which the United States scarcely had the seafaring population. Indeed the Secretary of the Treasury admitted that of the four thousand added each year five-eighths were of British origin. American skippers picked them up anywhere they could, and apparently the certificates of citizenship, or "protections," which the American government issued to its natural-born seamen with the honest intention of guaranteeing them against impressment by British boarding parties, facilitated desertions by English mariners from their own ships. Certificates could be got for one dollar from any one of a number of minor American officials: notaries public, justices of the peace, judges, mayors, secretaries and governors of the several states, collectors of customs, and consuls stationed at foreign ports. A simple oath established the genuineness of American citizenship on the part of the applicant. If a deserting British seaman hesitated to perjure himself, he might buy a "protection" from a fellow American mariner for ten dollars or more. The British Foreign Office archives contain many consular reports from the United States on the frequency of desertions from British vessels while in American or other foreign ports and the ease with which the deserters acquired testi-

monials to their supposed American citizenship Lord St. Vincent, the First Lord of the Admiralty, may or may not have exaggerated when he accused American consuls stationed in French, Spanish, and Portuguese ports of selling American citizenship to any Englishman who applied. And, he added, "I have known more than one American master to carry off soldiers, in their regimentals, arms and accoutrements, from the garrison at Gibraltar."²

But if the American merchant marine had an insatiable need for seamen, the requirements of the British Navy were equally, perhaps more, pressing. Such leakages in man power could hardly be tolerated, and the picture of wholesale desertions firmly fixed in the British mind undoubtedly accounts for the stubborn British rejection of all American offers of compromise. Moreover, there was the ever difficult question of bona fide citizenship. The American naturalization law of 1790 required only two years of residence (temporarily extended to fourteen years under the Alien Act of 1798). This liberality, combined with the patent abuse of the "protections," created a natural suspicion in Great Britain of the honesty of American intentions.

The intensity of impressment activities varied according to the conditions of the war, with a tendency to grow steadily after 1803. Apparently at first most of the cases of seizure took place in British ports or from ships in West Indian or European waters, but, as the need for seamen in the Navy grew, the practice spread to include ships engaged in the American coasting trade. In seeking redress the American government really concerned itself only with its own native-born citizens, passing over in practice, though not in law, its contention that no *person* could be impressed from an American vessel on the high seas.

There is no question that many genuine native Americans were victimized, and one may well discount the honest intentions of many British boarding parties. A victim could procure his release only by filing a claim with an American agent or consul and submitting documentary proof of his citizenship. Correspondence of painful length was inevitable, since the British officials rejected the ordinary affidavits. The work was so arduous that the American government supplemented its regular consular service abroad by a special agent stationed in London and another special agent in the West Indies having as their sole duty the investigation of impressment cases. The consular reports are the basis for estimating the number of

² Quoted from Mahan, *Sea Power in Its Relation to the War of 1812* (2 vols., Boston, 1919), I, 124.

American citizens impressed. For the period 1793–1802 they number 2,410, for the years from 1803 to 1812, the figure is 6,000. Neither of these figures of course indicates the total number of men impressed from American vessels.

American diplomacy all through the period of warfare aimed at an agreement in which Great Britain would renounce impressment on the high seas in return for an undertaking on the part of the United States that it would not take deserters from British ships into its service. A special mission sent to London by Jefferson in 1806 nearly achieved success along these lines.⁸ It was prepared to undertake that Congress would enact legislation imposing penalties on any American master who knowingly signed up a British mariner on his vessel. The practicability of this proposed solution, however, never had to be tested because the British Admiralty at the last moment rejected it.

There is a human side to the impressment question that separates it from the related and more prosaic issues involving neutral rights. Impressment meant grief, suffering, and shame for hundreds of young men and their parents, wives, and sweethearts. It reached sympathies and vibrated hatreds in America in a way that ship and cargo seizures could not. A minority of New England Federalists—some with eyes fixed only on the practical problems of Atlantic shipping, others moved by their fears of Napoleon—hardened themselves to endure it patiently. But otherwise impressment came to be regarded universally as a cross to be borne not with meekness but with mounting indignation. Personal tales told by victims of the British press gang furnished copy for the newspapers, especially perhaps the newer and more nationalistically minded ones, like *Niles Weekly Register* of Baltimore. Survivors of the Revolution, like John Adams, were much affected, Adams denounced his fellow Federalists in New England as the “calves of John Bull.” But the deepest impression, to all accounts, was made on the people of the West, whose passions were the more easily loosed against the British because of the connection they saw between the Indian scalping knife and the British trader from Canada.

When in June 1807 a British ship of war, the “Leopard,” carried its search for deserters to the point of attacking the American frigate “Chesapeake” off Chesapeake Bay and of removing four men from its decks, impressment plumbed the depths of national disgrace. The “Chesapeake” incident was formally erased as an issue between the

⁸ This was the Monroe-Pinkney mission, whose attempts to find a diplomatic solution for other issues are discussed below in chapter 52, p. 744.

governments through a stiff apology received from the British government; but it left an indelible mark on the popular mind

When President Madison finally in 1812 resolved to urge war upon Congress, he appropriately singled out impressment as the first cause of provocation. It stirred the national feeling the most deeply. But until 1812 the influence of the administration was used to prevent war in the military sense, in negotiating at various times with the British government it treated impressment as one phase of the problem of neutral rights, and in the course of the years after 1807 the issue was subordinated to other matters. The economic warfare which the United States waged against Britain and, to some extent, France, after 1807 was reprisal not against British impressment alone, but against the general interference by belligerents with American shipping. Legislation was enacted in the hope of forcing a suspension of the British Orders in Council which established a control system over neutral ships, the abolition of impressment was not one of its declared purposes. Economic warfare proved a failure; a fresh pressure for war emerged from the American West in 1811-12; and the President found in the unforgotten indignity of impressment the best justification of the step he finally resolved upon.⁴

CHAPTER 50

THE "TRENT" AFFAIR, 1861

ON THE MORNING of November 8, 1861, the United States steam sloop of war, "San Jacinto," lay waiting in Bahama Channel. The British mail steamer "Trent" was due to pass, en route from Havana to St Thomas in the Danish West Indies, and Captain Wilkes of the "San Jacinto" meant to intercept her. Wilkes himself had left Havana only ten days before, having learned from the newspapers that two well-known Confederates, James M. Mason of Virginia and John Slidell of Louisiana, were also there, having booked passage on the "Trent." At St Thomas they would transship to Southampton. Mason's ultimate destination was London, and Slidell's Paris, where each would try to convince the British and

⁴ The causes of the War of 1812 constitute one of the most debatable questions in American history. As an influence on popular opinion it is most probable that impressment ranks first. It stimulated a fighting attitude. But as an actual cause of the war it blended with other questions. See chapters 4 and 52, pp. 81-93, 738-48.

French governments, respectively, that it was the part of wisdom to recognize the Confederate States.

On his part Wilkes was no ordinary officer. He had a well-earned reputation for achievement in the fields of exploration and natural science. He was hunting slavers off the African coast when the Civil War broke out, and he got his first news of the conflict while calling at the Cape Verde Islands. A hope of finding Confederate privateers had led him to the West Indies, but the prospect of spoiling Mason and Slidell's mission seemed more important. Wilkes was sure of his legal right to stop the British vessel, but his executive officer was not. The venture was to be purely a personal one, as the captain had not been in touch with Washington since he had left the United States, and the difference of opinion with his subordinate he resolved in favor of himself.

The resulting seizure followed much according to plan. A shell aimed to explode in front of the bow of the "Trent" brought her to; a boarding party had no trouble in recognizing the two Confederate envoys; and a pretense of using force, which Mason and Slidell thoughtfully insisted be exercised upon them, had the desired effect. The two envoys, accompanied by their two secretaries, found themselves prisoners on the "San Jacinto" bound for Fortress Monroe, the "Trent" having proceeded on her course. The seizure was news in the United States on November 16; but in Britain the affair remained unknown until the 27th.

In America the people were delighted and Wilkes was overwhelmed with attention. The Secretary of the Navy publicly congratulated him, Congress unanimously awarded him a vote of thanks and ordered a gold medal to be struck, and the affair was generally treated as a great victory and a heroic exploit. Governor Andrew of Massachusetts voiced the common sentiment when he described it as "one of the most illustrious services that had made the war memorable." People in the North were ready to grasp at a straw: the stunning rout at Bull Run had put them in a bad mood, and knowledge of the purpose of the Mason and Slidell mission had not helped matters. Also it was a real event for a *British* ship to be forcibly stopped and searched, and one may ask whether it was not this fact, fully as much as the blow dealt the Confederacy, that accounted for the general rejoicing. It seemed to make the deeper impression. "Every other man is walking about with a Law Book under his arm and proving the *right* of the Ss. Jacintho to stop H.M.'s mail boat," we are told that the British consul exclaimed in Boston the day after the report was published. Governor Andrew

certainly put the stress here. He was especially pleased, he said, that a shot had been fired across the bows of a "ship that bore the British Lion at its head."

What is more, the legal fraternity heartily agreed. Such well-known persons as Richard Henry Dana, Caleb Cushing, and Edward Everett went on record, while Theophilus Parsons of the Harvard School of Law declared he was as certain of Wilkes' legal right to take Mason and Slidell from the "Trent" as of the government's right to blockade the port of Charleston. All of this in the face of the long, familiar record of denunciation of the British right of search. "In my judgment," wrote Caleb Cushing, previously a passionate supporter of the American claim to immunity, "the act of Captain Wilkes was one which any and every self-respecting nation must and would have done by its own sovereign right and power, regardless of consequences . . . it was an act amply justified by the principles and doctrines of international jurisprudence"

This feeling of pleasure and gratifying ability on the part of learned men in putting the shoe on the other foot lasted about a month. Then it changed into anger and vexation as the mistake in the American position was driven home. The price of Wilkes' "heroic deed" proved to be an act of appeasement bordering on national mortification. One man in Lincoln's Cabinet—Montgomery Blair, the Postmaster-General—was imaginative enough in the first place to see how the government might make a brilliant stroke out of Wilkes's rashness. Why not publicly reprimand the captain and send the envoys directly to Great Britain, thereby forestalling any possible demand from that power? Seward was silent; Lincoln apparently saw the point, but hesitated too long, the rest of the Cabinet were too happy to think. What could have been done with dignity and confidence, if done quickly, eventually was done under compulsion.¹

In Britain the reaction was equally sudden and powerful but was an outburst of wrath. Declared an experienced American observer in London, two days after the report: "There never was

¹ The quoted extracts in this chapter are borrowed from C. F. Adams, "The Trent Affair," *American Historical Review*, XVII (1912), 540-62, and from E. D. Adams, *Great Britain and the American Civil War* (2 vols., London, 1925), I, 203-43. The best clue to Lincoln's early reaction is found in Carl Sandburg, *Abraham Lincoln. The War Years* (3 vols., New York, 1941), I, 364, but unfortunately Sandburg omits citation of his authority. "I'm not getting much sleep out of that exploit of Wilkes's," he quotes Lincoln as saying. "I am not much of a prize lawyer, but it seems to me pretty clear that if Wilkes saw fit to make that capture on the high seas he had no right to turn his quarter-deck into a prize court."

within memory such a burst of feeling as has been created by the news of the boarding of [the "Trent"]. The people are frantic with rage, and were the country polled, I fear 999 men out of a thousand would declare for immediate war. Lord Palmerston [the Prime Minister] cannot resist the impulse if he would." With characteristic foresight Palmerston had already considered the possibility that the Americans might intercept Mason and Slidell. The presence of an armed American paddle-wheel ship in Southampton had made him suspicious; he thought it might be waiting to search the British packet as it approached British waters; and legal opinion, which he secured confidentially, satisfied him in advance that if the Americans made the seizure they would be within their rights. There was an important qualification to this, however, which the Prime Minister at first failed to grasp: if such a seizure took place, said the Law Officers of the Crown, it would have to include the vessel itself. The ship would have to be taken to the United States for adjudication by a prize court. Though they were ignorant of the fact, the British authorities were really on the same ground as Lincoln and Seward on the opposite side of the water. A naval officer, acting on his own initiative, could not, as Lincoln put it, turn his quarter-deck into a prize court. The truth is that there was no precedent for the "Trent" Affair, that emissaries from a belligerent country had never been removed from a neutral vessel plying between two neutral ports, and that the right of search as developed by Great Britain did not furnish a guide for Captain Wilkes's action. The one point that was clear was that he had behaved arbitrarily and hence, according to the practice of *both* countries, judicial proceedings were essential.

Certainly the British government was in no position to ignore the incident. It was bound to protest even under international law. But public anger appears to have been the compelling factor, at least with respect to the speed with which action was taken and terms were demanded. When the Foreign Secretary dispatched a note on November 30, within three days of the first knowledge of the seizure, he was not in possession of all of the facts. He did not know, for instance, whether Wilkes had acted on authority from Washington or not. The British demands were stiff—restoration of the prisoners, and an apology. Fears of Seward's war plotting quickly revived, and the Foreign Office wondered whether this was not a deliberately chosen incident to provoke war. Eight thousand men were hastily embarked for Canada, and the fleet was made ready. It was only then that the Foreign Office received a confidential tip from Seward himself that Wilkes had taken the law into his own hands.

Second thought began to get the upper hand in both countries early in December. The British worried over the defenseless state of Canada, not to mention the losses sure to be suffered by their shipping. The North began to realize what a new war would do to their prospects of victory over the South. "If you are resolved to succeed against the South, *have no war with England*," warned John Bright, the British antislavery leader, and his correspondent, Charles Sumner, the chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, knew the advice was sound. So did Lincoln and Seward, to whom Sumner took Bright's letter. They had seven days in which to decide; and they took the full time. Then on December 26, 1861, Seward announced that the prisoners would be cheerfully given up. By admitting that the United States had an obligation to make reparation, he sidestepped the humiliating demand for an apology, and the British were satisfied not to stand on this point of pride. After all, there was no occasion for an apology. Wilkes had acted without authority, and the British now knew it. The United States had met the necessary conditions.

With his usual cleverness, Seward made the best of a bad situation. The American government having missed the chance to make the grand stroke urged by Postmaster-General Blair, the Secretary now applauded Britain for at last endorsing American principles. The conclusion was entirely unjustified by the facts, and Lord Russell, the British Foreign Secretary, read Seward a lecture on the limitations of the right of search. Seward had said that Mason and Slidell were "personal contraband," and that Wilkes was wrong only in that he omitted to bring the "Trent" itself before a prize court. But he deliberately overlooked the point that the "Trent" was sailing from one neutral port to another, that Mason and Slidell were not going to a country at war with the United States, and that persons, much less diplomatic agents, had never been defined as contraband.² There was no more justification for seizing Mason and Slidell when they were on a voyage between Havana and St. Thomas than there would have been if they had been on a British packet sailing from Dover to Calais.

² It is doubtful if there has ever been a repetition of the "Trent" Affair on the part of any country. The British Foreign Secretary correctly stated the rule respecting the inviolability of ambassadors. "An ambassador sent to a neutral power must be considered as inviolable on the high seas, as well as in neutral waters, while under the protection of the neutral flag" (Moore, *Digest*, VII, 772). While Mason and Slidell were not "ambassadors" in the conventional sense, they nevertheless represented a government which possessed belligerent rights, and it was quite reasonable to assume that they had a claim to diplomatic immunity.

But none of these legal points really mattered one way or the other. Seward had the task of appeasing both Great Britain and the American public, and he did very well. There was hard feeling left on the American side, a sense that the British had been rough. But Seward gave out his note for publication immediately, without waiting for its receipt in London, and public opinion accepted the result good-humoredly. The Secretary gave a further example of his artistry in converting a sting into a laugh when he gave out a story that he had granted gracious permission to the British forces destined to reinforce Canada to enter Portland harbor and cross Maine in order to reach their destination. Supposedly the St. Lawrence was ice-blocked. Actually no British troops passed through American territory, and the story originated from the request of a private Montreal firm to be allowed to land some officers' baggage at Portland.

Mason and Slidell duly reached their destination on board a British battleship, but their arrival made no impression on British policy toward the war. There never had been any reason for assuming that it would, since Lord Palmerston had truthfully told the American minister that a couple of Southern envoys added to the two or three who had already served time in London would make no difference. They were not received or treated as the diplomatic representatives of a foreign country. "I am heart and soul a neutral," declared Lord Russell, "... what a fuss we have had about these two men."

CHAPTER 51

THE CASE OF THE STEAMSHIP "CHINA," 1916

IN FEBRUARY 1916 the British naval commander on the China station learned that thirty-eight Germans, Austrians, and Turks—all of them enemies of Great Britain and all engaged in a conspiracy to collect and send arms to India for the purpose of fomenting rebellion—were about to transfer their activities from Shanghai to Manila. They had passage on the American mail steamer "China," due to leave Shanghai on the eighteenth for Nagasaki, Japan, where presumably passage would be taken on another

American boat going direct to Manila. Acting upon this information, the British commander posted the auxiliary cruiser "Laurentic" ten miles off the mouth of the Yangtze River with orders to lie in wait for the "China." The seizure was carried out in due course, all thirty-eight prisoners being taken to Hong Kong and thence to Sydney, Australia. A circumstantial fact that subsequently became important was that the British commander knew at the time of seizure that fifteen of his prisoners, besides being conspirators, were also military reservists using false passports secured for them by the German consul in Shanghai and traveling on funds supplied by the German government. This information, however, he did not give to the authorities in London until later, consequently the official British defense of his act was prepared only on the ground that the prisoners had conspired on neutral Chinese soil against the peace of India.

The case of the "China" is the outstanding incident among twelve such involving forcible removal of persons from the decks of American vessels during the years 1914 to 1917. The French acted six times, with one exception their seizures taking place on the Caribbean, the British four times in addition to the "China," and the Germans once. The German case was the closest parallel to British impressment of a hundred years before. A German boarding party removed two seamen, who said they were Scandinavian, on the ground that they were reservists in the German army and as such obligated for military duty. But the American State Department dismissed an argument over the matter with the remark that it did not care to foster the desertion of seamen.

The "China" case was the only incident of its kind which led to an argument, the other instances involving the British and French being settled by compromise without an effort to deal with principles. Apparently it was the number of persons taken off the "China" that impressed the State Department indifference to this seizure might tempt the Allies to extend the practice widely.

Secretary Lansing used strong language, consciously keyed to the tone employed by Russell in the "Trent" Affair. The interference was an "affront to the American flag"; the removal of the thirty-eight enemy aliens was repetitious of the "Trent" case; the American government would not allow the argument to develop into an extended correspondence but wanted an apology and the release of the prisoners "now." The British Foreign Office decided to comply as a matter of courtesy; but just as it reached this decision it was apprised of the additional information respecting the reservist

character of fifteen of its prisoners. It now wished to keep the fifteen, and put the point very strongly that reservists in the German sense were persons incorporated in the armed services and subject to call; they were different from American or British civilians of military age, even though they were not in uniform. It was especially urgent on this point because of the previous refusal of the United States to consider a summons home to an alien in this country as equivalent to an act of recruiting.

The "China" dispute was terminated in the same practical manner as the other cases: the British released all of their prisoners in October 1916 and shipped them back to Shanghai. They expressed indifference toward the reservist character of the fifteen when it was disclosed that the latter were all past forty years of age. No apology and no expression of regret was offered, and Lansing did not press the point. Furthermore, the "law" in the matter was left entirely open. Was it lawful for a warship to remove enemy aliens from a neutral vessel, when they were known or were believed to be conspirators? Were enemy military reservists the same as uniformed soldiers, and therefore subject to removal? The "Trent" case made this class of persons the only exception. And was it really practical to do what both Seward and Russell said should have been done in 1861—bring the vessel as a prize into port and thereby put both the owner and the passengers to great inconvenience, merely to avoid the implication of an arbitrary act against a few individuals. The British government thought this question purely academic, and said so in conclusion. Unless a neutral government expressed a wish to the contrary and was ready to agree in advance to waive all claim for compensation for losses, the British would follow their established practice.

The "China" case caused an argument between Secretary Lansing and the British government. No one else paid any attention. President Wilson ignored it and other like cases, and among the press only the *New York Times*, faithful to its slogan of "All the news that's fit to print," followed the case through with an account of the facts. Best proof that disputes of this kind had lost their power to excite popular indignation was the indifference of the Hearst and pro-German sections of the press. Evidently they doubted their ability to use it as an opportunity for tail-twisting.¹

¹ In the early stages of the Second World War a British, or Australian, cruiser removed a number of enemy reservists or agents from the decks of a Japanese liner bound from the United States to Yokohama. The men were en route to Germany via Japan and the Trans-Siberian Railway.

NEUTRALITY AND THE BELLIGERENT CONTROL OF COMMERCE

THE TERMINOLOGY of international law habitually makes use of two opposite and contradictory conceptions, "neutral rights" and "belligerent rights." Inevitably the neutral seeks to appropriate certain legal rights to himself, and conceives of these rights as belonging to a fixed pattern. Emotionally their bulwark has been the principle of freedom of the seas, which, as we remember, is an older and broader concept. But historically there was nothing in common between the two ideas. The Roman doctrine rested on the concept of universal empire, and was implemented through the use of the police power. "Neutral rights," on the other hand, was an expression of the state system of western Europe, with its theories of independent sovereignties. Thomas Jefferson successfully assimilated it with Roman principles and used it to promote his claim that war should not interfere with the peaceful activities of neutral nations.

"Belligerent rights," on the other hand, was a concept set up to justify the state which was at war in using all its available power for the successful prosecution of the conflict. The familiar instruments of belligerent rights included contraband and blockade, both of which entailed the use of naval power for the stoppage of the enemy's commerce. Like the neutral, the belligerent conceived of his rights in terms of a fixed pattern, which meant any means necessary to win the war. Practically speaking, however, the "rights" of belligerents and neutrals were never conditioned by a fixed code but were the result of what either was willing to grant the other in order to avoid an armed collision. A neutral who insisted on the maximum of his "rights" was likely to terminate the argument in war.

There are three important instances in American history which illustrate the conflict between neutral and belligerent rights. In two of them the United States was the neutral, Great Britain the belligerent. In the American Civil War the roles were reversed. As the belligerent who desired to wage economic war at sea on the enemy,

the United States developed a flexible type of blockade admirably suited to its own interests but quite neglectful of the conventional pattern of "neutral rights." Great Britain deliberately declined to champion her unique role as leading neutral in this conflict, however; she put her long-range interests as a sea power ahead of such temporary commercial advantages as she might have won by insisting upon her "neutral rights." The net outcome of the American Civil War, therefore, was to reinforce the legal rectitude of the belligerent as against the neutral in future wars. For various reasons the American government again elected to spill ink on the subject during the first two years of the War of 1914-1918, but without the intention of using anything stronger. In this war Britain naturally adapted maritime warfare to suit the new conditions of conflict, just as both she and the United States had done in previous wars. The real effect of the War of 1914-1918 was to strip "neutral rights" of all meaning. In fact, the whole conception of maritime warfare was drastically altered by this conflict. Old methods of blockade and search at sea were supplemented by new devices of economic control which eventually proved more efficient in strangling the enemy's trade. In the Second World War the Anglo-American powers so improved upon these new techniques as virtually to make old types of maritime warfare obsolete.

The three case studies in this group involve. (1) The Wars of the French Revolution and Napoleon, (2) The American Civil War, (3) the World War of 1914-1918. A note at the end describes the system of total economic warfare waged by the Anglo-American powers in World War II.

CHAPTER 52

NEUTRAL RIGHTS: THE WARS OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION AND NAPOLEON

AMERICAN IDEAS of neutral rights, we remember, were first put into words by the Treaty Plan of 1776. There were four basic principles, framed for the advantage of a country which had goods to sell and ships for carrying them—and one which anticipated liberation from the wars and political embroilment of Europe. These

principles were: (1) free (that is, neutral) ships make free goods, except contraband of war; (2) contraband should be limited to certain designated commodities, notably arms and munitions, neither of which was then produced for export in the United States, (3) a blockade, in order to be legal, requires a cordon of warships stationed off the enemy port or coast, sufficient in numbers to be effective against vessels attempting to enter or leave; and (4) a neutral ship is entitled to participate in the coasting or colonial trade of a belligerent

A judicious compromise with Britain in 1794 on the definition of contraband saved these principles from an early demise. What perhaps is more to the point, it saved American commerce and shipping, and a golden flow of profits, injured somewhat by French depredations, it is true, continued to pour into the outstretched hands of the merchants and to enrich the country generally. America had provisions and raw materials of all kinds to sell: corn, wheat, flour, beef, and pork; lumber and lumber products, embracing everything from barrel staves to masts; naval stores, an absolute essential for wooden ships; raw cotton, tobacco, and miscellaneous commodities. After making allowance for price changes, the value of American exports in 1796 was found to be double that of the year before the war, treble by 1801, and nearly quadruple by 1807. Then began a series of losses, which kept up, with the exception of a few brief intervals, until the close of the War of 1812.

The unique contribution of the United States during these years in which money was being made was its performance as a carrier nation. By 1803 American ships were doing almost all of the cargo business of their own country and no small part of the business of Great Britain and France. In peace times this would hardly have been possible under the colonial systems of both European countries, which excluded by law the vessels of third nations from participating in their coasting or colonial trade. We recall, for instance, that American ships were shut out of the important West Indian business after the Revolution. A French order revoking the rule for the French colonial trade in 1793, however, was the lure which drew a swarm of American vessels to the Caribbean. The British captured some three hundred of them in a single raid under the Rule of 1756: as the British saw it, there was no reason why a neutral who had been barred from a certain trade in time of peace should give the enemy the advantage of his tonnage in time of war.

Yankee skippers found a way to circumvent the Rule of 1756, however, and for nearly a dozen years the French sugar business

prospered without hindrance from the British. The cargoes were brought from the Islands of Charleston and Savannah, where they were entered as American and immediately re-exported to France. Thus the United States, which produced practically no sugar at that time, soon became the world's greatest dealer in that commodity. In 1791 the customs houses listed seventy-nine million pounds exported, in 1806 nearly one hundred and forty-six million. The British had no reason for making sugar and coffee contraband, so they allowed cargoes of French sugar to pass when on board American vessels voyaging between American and French ports. In other words, here was practical recognition of the principle that free ships make free goods, to the advantage of French planters and Yankee shipping. In quite a human way Congress took advantage of this liberality in 1799 by passing a law enabling cargoes arriving from the West Indies to be reshipped to foreign ports without the formality of going through the customs. Under this law a vessel was saved the time and expense of coming up to the dock and unloading her cargo; mere appearance in the harbor of an American port would neutralize the sugar on board, and the ship was free to sail at once for France.

Naturally British prize courts began to question this practice. The British Navy made a number of tentative seizures; and Sir William Scott, whose decisions came to be accepted as fundamental in international prize law, extended the principle of continuous voyage to cover the sugar business. Under this principle a shipment is legal according to its real, rather than its apparent, destination; and, since the "American" sugar trade was really French in origin and destination, it was now open to interference under the laws of war. The implications of Scott's decisions were popularized in Great Britain by an experienced barrister, James Stephen, whose book, *War in Disguise, or the Frauds of the Neutral Flags*, was issued in 1805. Even so, the British did not systematically interfere with the sugar and coffee trade until the close of the following year.

While discussing the increasing British controls, it is essential that we bear in mind the character of French economic warfare. The French of course were ready to let American shipping serve their ends, but they were equally ready to interfere with it when it carried cargoes for Britain. We recall the depredations of 1798 and their sequel in an armed conflict. Napoleon made peace, but when he resumed the war with Britain he also renewed the practice of raiding American ships. Over a period of years French confiscations were more numerous and grievous than British.

French economic warfare differed considerably from the British in that it was unable to rely on a navy. The French fleet was immobilized at Brest, and a cordon of British warships anchored off this base made it difficult to secure the necessary naval stores. Then on October 21, 1805, Lord Nelson annihilated the combined Spanish and French fleets at Trafalgar, and the French thenceforth depended wholly on privateers and single cruisers. Even so, these were numerous enough to make it necessary for the British to convoy their merchant fleets through the English Channel. On the other hand, the French looked to neutral vessels to carry on their coasting trade, a vital artery of war, and British success at sea meant raiding this trade. There was no regular British blockade of the French coast at any time. The nearest approach to the American conception of a blockade was made under an order in council of May 16, 1806, which established a patrol of the coast between Havre and Ostend. This was designed simply to increase the effectiveness of the privateers and cruisers operating from English Channel ports; and since the neutrals now had the largest share of the French coasting business in their hands, they ran the risks of seizure accordingly. Presumably it was the chance for high profits that kept a large amount of American tonnage abroad; and as the European neutrals grew fewer in number the attractions for American ships became more inviting.¹

Napoleon pinned his faith chiefly on the so-called Continental System, devised by the Directory in 1798 but better developed under the Berlin and Milan Decrees of 1806-1807. There was a double purpose to be served—a mercantile one of excluding British manufacturers from the Continent for the benefit of French industry, and a political one of bringing about a British defeat. If Britain could be deprived of her markets on the Continent, so it was concluded, she would in effect be starved; she would also be prevented from subsidizing her allies.

The first trial of this plan was made when the Low Countries, Spain, and a portion of Italy were under French control. The Directory decreed that any vessel found at sea with an English cargo on board, in whole or in part, was lawful prize; that the ownership of the merchandise mattered not, that the mere fact that it had come from England or her colonies made the vessel and everything else

¹ The best analysis of the maritime warfare of this period, and of its relation to neutrals, is to be found in A. T. Mahan's *The Influence of Sea Power upon the French Revolution and Empire, 1793-1812* (2 vols., 14th ed., Boston, 1919) and in his *Sea Power in Its Relation to the War of 1812* (2 vols., Boston, 1919).

on board contraband. As a Frenchman picturesquely expressed it, "if a handkerchief of English origin is found on board a neutral ship, both the rest of the cargo and the ship itself are subject to condemnation." The scheme had little practical effect except to encourage French privateers to plunder neutral shipping indiscriminately, wherever they could find it, on its part, the British European trade was diverted to the ports of Germany.

Having laid the whole of Europe outside of Russia at his feet, Napoleon entertained hopes of greater success with the Continental System. Theoretically he subjected the British Isles to a total blockade. The Berlin Decree of November 21, 1806, so ordered and forbade any vessel which had touched at a British or a British colonial port to enter the harbors of the French Empire or its allies. This was followed in December 1807—more than a year later—by a second decree issued at Milan. The Milan decree served notice that any neutral ship which had submitted to search by a British cruiser thereby became "denationalized," and could accordingly be treated as a "vagrant" at sea. The only two weapons Napoleon had at his command for the enforcement of these measures were, of course, the customary French ones: exclusion from French and French-controlled ports, and unlimited use of the privateer.

For their part, the British set out to kill the French coasting trade, which meant interfering with "neutral" ships. In appearance the celebrated orders in council of November 11, 1807, declared a universal "paper blockade" of the entire European coast. Any port from which the British flag was excluded, regardless whether the country of that port was technically at war with Britain or not, was to be closed to trade and navigation as though it were under strict blockade. But these orders were accompanied by certain printed exceptions, which showed the British had another purpose in mind. They did not mean to lose their Continental trade, hence the exceptions were drawn with the object of *encouraging* neutrals to trade with Continental ports, and even the ports of French colonies, provided they called first at a British port, unloaded the cargo, and paid the duty. Thus even sugar from the French colonies might continue to reach France safely in an American bottom if it was routed via London. Special licenses issued to neutral ships upon their arrival in a British port authorized them to proceed to any designated port on the Continent. In this manner American shipping could be turned to the advantage of British industry, and London would resume its old place as an entrepôt to European commerce. Not being interested in the stoppage of the provision trade between the United

States and France, the British excepted vessels bearing this type of cargo from the necessity of calling at a British port.

Thus the British program was equally mercantilistic. The term "blockade" described a system the central point of which was that vessels approaching the European coast (or coming away from it) called at a British port. And the favorable location of the English coast relative to the Continent, supported by large numbers of armed ships, made the system an effective one. It was a "paper blockade" only in that it did not conform to the theoretical definition of a blockade. What really happened to American shipping was that it was reduced to its former colonial status, subject to the British Navigation Laws. It was obliged to deviate to a British port and operate under a British license. The objects of the system may be summed up as follows: (1) promotion of the British re-export trade, formerly a basic cornerstone of the mercantile system, (2) the forcing up of the prices of French and other European colonial exports with a view to giving the British colonial producer an equal chance in the world market; and (3) the use of neutral bottoms in protecting the even flow of British manufactures to France and the Continent. This was by no stretch of the imagination a "starvation blockade"; in organization it furnished a precedent for the "blockade" of Germany in 1914-18, but as to the end to be served the resemblance of the two is slight indeed. There were emergencies when crop failures in France, as in 1793, made it expedient to impose a temporary blockade on provisions; but generally speaking the food stock of France was a matter of indifference to the British, and the provision trade was too minor a part of French foreign commerce to be worth interrupting. And for the same reason contraband goods played a comparatively insignificant part in the Napoleonic Wars. It was quite otherwise in the World War of 1914-18.

Lord Wellesley succinctly explained the British program in the instructions he handed Augustus Foster, the newly appointed minister to the United States, in April 1811. He wrote:

You will perceive that the object of our System was not to crush the Trade of the Continent, but to counteract an attempt to crush the British Trade; that we have endeavoured to permit the continent to receive as large a portion of commerce as might be practicable through Great Britain; and that all our subsequent Regulations, and every modification of the System, by new Orders or modes of granting or withholding Licenses, have been calculated for the purpose of encouraging the Trade of Neutrals through Great Britain, whenever such encouragement might appear advantageous to the general interests of commerce, and consistent with

the Public safety of the Nation; the preservation of which is the primary object of all National Councils, and the paramount duty of Executive Power.²

The basic instruments in promoting this system, let us remember, were the compulsory visit paid to a British port by all neutral vessels on pain of seizure and the license procured by the neutral shipowner for the purpose of trading with the Continent. The system was not fully employed until 1807, and until that year the American government used no weapon to counteract it. The number of licenses issued to neutrals by the British government rose from sixteen hundred in 1807 to fifteen thousand in 1809 and to eighteen thousand in 1810. Meanwhile Jefferson developed a program of economic reprisal aimed at forcing Britain and France virtually to give up their economic warfare on each other and recognize his ideas of freedom of the seas. Those Yankee skippers who were able to escape the toils of Jefferson's system remained abroad as willing exiles and engaged in the British carrying trade. Neither Napoleon nor Jefferson had an appreciable effect on the sum total of British trade, though there were certain years of bad harvests in England when American provisions would have helped substantially. Markets for British manufactures, on the other hand, were obtained elsewhere, notably in Latin America, and until June 17, 1812, when an emergency arose, there was no sign of yielding on the part of Great Britain. Of the three parties engaged in this triangular economic warfare after 1807, she appears to have lost the least.

It is not wholly a coincidence that American policy underwent a sharp reversal in 1807. The British application of the principle of continuous voyage had already cut sharply into the West Indian sugar business. The profits of American foreign trade generally were still very good, however, as we have noted. The Jefferson administration had sent two envoys, James Monroe and William Pinkney, to London in an effort to get a promise to abandon the interference with the French sugar trade and to renounce outright the claim to impressment on the high seas. Monroe and Pinkney reached a practical compromise with the British government on commercial matters, but they fell down with respect to impressment. On this point Jefferson refused to consider their treaty; then followed the "Chesapeake" Affair in June 1807, and the British order in council of November issued in retaliation for Napoleon's Berlin

² *Instructions to the British Ministers to the United States, 1791-1812*, American Historical Association, *Annual Report*, III, 1936, 311-12.

Decree. With this stepping-up of the economic war on the seas and the smarting blow dealt to American pride in the matter of the "Chesapeake," Jefferson resolved on a system of reprisal he had long had in mind.

The President recalled the success which the non-importation and non-intercourse agreements had had in the early stages of the American Revolution. These had brought quick promise of redress then; why should not similar measures be equally effective now? Through the Republican majority in Congress two laws were enacted to permit the experiment: (1) the Non-Importation Act of April 18, 1806, prohibiting the importation of a specified list of British manufactures, and (2) the Embargo Act of December 22, 1807, forbidding all vessels, American and foreign, to leave the United States for any foreign port. Both statutes were put into operation on the date of the passage of the second act. Jefferson had suspended the first measure until he could observe whether the threat of putting it into operation would make an impression on the British government. Monroe and Pinkney had been sent to London with this in view, with such results as we have already described. It was Jefferson's unwillingness to accept any compromises that pushed matters now to the extreme.

If the President expected co-operation from his countrymen in a program which destroyed the shipping and foreign trade of the United States, he shot wide of the mark. The Swedish historian of the maritime warfare of this period, E. F. Heckscher, sums up the consequences in the following words:

It makes an almost moving impression to see how one supplementary law after another, each more detailed and more draconic than the other, seeks to stop up the holes in the original law, which was very summary; but it has seldom been shown more distinctly that a constant succession of new laws on the same subject means a constant disobedience to the provisions of the law.⁸

The supplementary legislation to which Dr. Heckscher refers was designed to correct two basic flaws in the original statutes. One had to do with the American coasting trade, so vital a part of the transportation system of the time. The Southern states, for instance, were furnished their flour and pork by means of it. Vessels evaded the Embargo Act by the simple device of clearing for an American port but sailing for a foreign destination. The Act had guarded

⁸ E. F. Heckscher, *The Continental System: An Economic Interpretation* (Oxford, 1922)

against this by requiring owners to post bonds double the value of the ship and cargo; but there was no way of verifying the arrival of the vessel at the port for which she had cleared. An act of January 9, 1809, increased the amount of the bond to *six times* the value of the cargo, forbade coasting vessels to transfer their lading to any other vessel at sea, and required them to file within two months with the collector of the port of departure a certificate of verification from the collector of the port of stated destination. The effectiveness of this act has not been measured. On its face it would seem quite imposing, but enforcement machinery in Jefferson's day was comparatively rudimentary.

The second flaw in the Jefferson system concerned the control of the trade across the Canadian and Floridan borders. Smuggling soon developed with all the virility so common to it in the eighteenth century. Smugglers openly used the following routes: from Vermont to Quebec by way of Lake Champlain, from Maine to New Brunswick by way of Passamaquoddy Bay and thence to Halifax, where waiting British ships, having discharged their cargoes of manufactures, picked up American provisions; from Georgia across the St. Mary's River to Amelia Island, which was Spanish. When the President increased the customs patrol on the Canadian border, armed bands of enraged farmers, minutemen of 1808, forced a passage through the lines for their grain-laden scows.

Inveterate smuggling partially but not wholly alleviated the severe depression that set in in America in 1808. One million tons of shipping were immobilized, with attendant effects upon employment, particularly among seamen. Gloom settled over the shipyards that had prospered so extensively during the previous years. The New England cod fisheries, whose catch was sold chiefly to the West Indies and Europe, are believed to have been ruined, and Southern growers of cotton and tobacco suffered similar effects. So obvious was the disaster from the embargo laws that Jefferson himself was brought to recommend their repeal in 1809, on the eve of his leaving office.

The Republicans, who drew their strength chiefly from the non-commercial parts of the country, were by no means ready to abandon Jefferson's experiments, however. They substituted a Non-Inter-course Act, March 1, 1809, which made only nominal changes in the system. It forbade intercourse with Britain and France, but it gave the Executive the power to resume full trade with either or both if they would alter their control systems in favor of American shipping. This was a thinly disguised invitation to the belligerents in Europe

to compete against each other for American favor. It fell on deaf ears. Napoleon's, because the British blockade barred American shipping anyway, Britain's, because the American embargo simply was not having the desired result.

The American government now tried a final expedient. Under a measure known as "Macon's bill number two," May 1, 1810, it repealed all previous legislation. In 1809 President Madison had temporarily suspended the Non-Intercourse Act, under the false assumption, encouraged by the British minister in Washington, David Erskine, that Britain was ready to make terms. Macon's bill number two reopened the seas to American shipping indefinitely but contained a curious offer addressed to the two European powers. If either one would revoke its decrees affecting American shipping, the United States would respond by reimposing its Non-Intercourse Act against the other, provided the second power did not follow the example of its enemy within three months. The American merchant marine was now restored to its former trade routes, with all the risks attendant upon the British and French decrees, until March 1811. A decoy put out by Napoleon then brought about the resumption of Non-Intercourse against Britain. The Emperor seized the chance proffered him by the Macon bill for making trouble between Britain and the United States: he showed the American minister in Paris a document which purported to rescind the French decrees so far as American vessels were concerned. Why President Madison should have accepted this document as proof of good faith is a mystery; the document was the merest gesture. At the very time it was brazenly publicized, the French laid fresh hold on American vessels in their ports, and Madison's envoy was fully aware of the seizure. At any rate Britain was again deprived of the use of American vessels and provisions, since she failed to follow the Emperor's example. The British government refused to honor the French announcement and correctly pointed to Napoleon's treachery; yet President Madison persisted in holding it to his demands on pain of putting the penalty clause of the Macon bill into execution.

The embargo system, as the whole scheme of economic coercion practiced by the United States from December 1807 to June 1812 (with a brief suspension in 1809 and again in 1810-1811) may be termed, was a form of warfare aimed chiefly at Britain. Until June 17, 1812, it had a record of uninterrupted failure. On that date the British government revoked its orders in council in order to meet a special emergency: It needed extra provisions from the United States to support the campaign of Wellington's army against Napo-

leon in Spain. For this reason it was willing to yield. The revocation of the orders took place on the day before the Congress of the United States declared war, but of course the latter had no knowledge of the step taken. When it became known in Washington the war was nevertheless continued on other grounds.

Jefferson had intended the economic war as a substitute for combat. There is no very satisfactory standard of judgment that can be exercised to gauge his schemes in this respect. If the British Order in Council of June 17, 1812, had been known in Washington in time, it would no doubt have taken much of the wind from the sails of the men who were urging war. On the other hand, there were other issues at stake which aroused a sharper resentment in the United States than the original British orders in council. These issues were in no way affected by the offer of the British government in 1812. What *would have been* the outcome with respect to them, *if* war had not been declared in June 1812, it is quite beyond anyone's capacity to judge.

CHAPTER 53

NEUTRAL RIGHTS: THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

THE UNITED STATES was the belligerent in 1861, Great Britain the neutral; and the customary roles were thus in reverse. The changed position becomes the more suggestive when we recall the peculiar economic relationship between the Confederate States and western Europe, Great Britain in particular. The South had a monopoly of the supply of raw material for the latter's cotton industry, by then one of the largest in the kingdom; and to its normal importance as one of the best markets for British manufactures was now added the special emergency of Southern war needs. Without rifles, cannon, and ammunition from British arsenals, uniforms, shoes, clothing, and scores of other articles from British mills, the Confederates could hardly carry on. The Lincoln administration was not slow in grasping this fact and in developing a desire to profit by it. A blockade of the Southern coast—thirty-five hundred miles long from Chesapeake Bay to the Rio Grande—was one of the

surest means of winning the war. Considering the small tonnage, not to mention the neglected condition of the Union Navy when the war broke out, the project seemed overambitious. But the economic geography of the South tempered the difficulties somewhat: an effective blockade could become a reality once a patrol could be stationed off each of the Southern *ports*. No general blockade of the entire coast was ever contemplated.

The authorities at Washington fitted their policy to the basic strategy of the conflict and to their comparative ability to make the blockade real. A general announcement of the intention to blockade the Southern ports, issued in April 1861, was followed gradually by the establishment of an actual blockade off each port as rapidly as ships could be built or found for the purpose. The first blockade was of the Virginia ports at the end of April, and by the close of the following month there were enough vessels available to make the semblance of a blockade of all of the important Confederate seaports. From then to the close of the war Union naval strategy concentrated on increasing the efficacy of the blockade, only minor attention being paid to the depredations of the Confederate commerce destroyers. Consequently the problem of neutral rights, as viewed from Great Britain, narrowed down chiefly to questions of the reality of the blockade, of the actual presence of Union warships off Southern harbors at all times of the year and in sufficient numbers to make it dangerous to enter or leave the harbor. The Lincoln administration used judgment in this respect; it waited until a patrol was in position off a certain port, and then the commander, acting under general authority, announced that port blockaded. In practice this meant that he warned all foreign merchant vessels but did not capture them unless they later disregarded the warning; departing ships were allowed to go through the blockade with their cargoes, arriving vessels were simply turned away.

But the problem can hardly be so easily dismissed. There were practical questions of seamanship involved in keeping a patrol constantly off the Southern ports, not to mention the urgent matter of number of ships. At first very easy, blockade-running developed into a skilled business early in the war and the number of ships that successfully eluded the blockade was always considerable, even in 1865 when the Union Navy had achieved its peak efficiency. The question of what was an effective blockade was open to argument; and a British government, thinking only of the temporary losses to British commerce or otherwise inclined to show an unfriendly attitude toward the North, was in a position to hurl the charge of "paper

blockade" against the Northern efforts. Mindful of their own interests as a sea power, however, and determined to maintain a policy of strict neutrality, the British were not disposed to be too critical of the blockade. The British naval forces on the North American station were systematically reinforced during the conflict, and British naval commanders kept themselves well informed of the nature and strength of the blockade. During May 1861 they were ordered to cruise along the Southern coast, noting the number of Union vessels off each port. A policy at first of allowing each commander to express his opinion in writing to the officer in charge of a blockading squadron respecting the effectiveness of the blockade was soon discontinued on the ground that it might prove provocative; and the general rule, as laid down by the Foreign Office in 1862, was to leave the definition of an "effective blockade" entirely to the Americans. The mere fact that "various ships" had escaped was no proof that the blockade was illegal.

This decision was made in London after the British commanders along the American coast had sent in their reports. Skill in handling the situation was due in no small part to the tact and ability of Sir Alexander Milne, the officer in charge of the British squadron. Milne was more conservative indeed than the rules of the United States required. For instance, a blockade from the American viewpoint did not apply to a visiting warship of a neutral country. British warships were free to enter and leave blockaded Southern harbors; but Milne ordered them to stay out, lest they create suspicion of rendering aid or moral support to the Southern cause. Most of Milne's officers were pro-Southern in sympathy, and considering the circumstances it could hardly have occasioned surprise if some explosive incident had happened. That it did not is a tribute to the admiral's ability and to the discipline of the service. Part of this self-restraint was due to the deliberate desire of the Admiralty to give the United States a long rein in the creation of precedents. "I conceive," Milne remarked, that "a record of the manner in which the United States' Cruizers are exercising their belligerent right of visit and search may be useful for reference at some future day." Nevertheless there were occasions when tight discipline was necessary. Volunteer officers in the Union Navy knew little about international law and cared less, especially when it came to violating the territorial waters of the British Bahamas in pursuit of prizes. Milne commented on "the high handed manner in which the United States were inclined to exercise their Belligerent rights, exhibiting a marked contrast to the views they took of those rights when formerly they were themselves

the Champions and advocate of Neutral powers" His maintenance of a policy of moderation is the more notable¹

The crucial test of British neutrality arose in connection with the blockade-running which the Confederates systematically developed. Under the supervision of Commander Bulloch, the Confederacy's able naval attaché in Great Britain, a group of Charleston merchants organized a firm in Liverpool through which cotton was exchanged for war matériel. The firm used regular British steamers in getting guns and munitions shipped to various neutral ports in the West Indies chiefly Bermuda and Nassau, Bahama Islands, both of which were British colonies. Thence the goods were transshipped on smaller and faster vessels specially designed to run the blockade. Success with this method was too great to be ignored, and Union cruisers met it by patrolling the regular steamer lanes near the Bermudas and the Bahamas, where they could readily intercept British vessels. In effect the area of blockade was extended out to sea and into West Indian waters; and when British vessels were found with war matériel on board, both vessel and cargo were confiscated. Federal prize courts upheld the seizures on the ground of continuous voyage, and ruled that the ship as well as the cargo was good prize because: "Successive voyages, connected by a common plan and a common object, form a plural unit . . . ships are planks of the same bridge, all of the same kind, and all necessary to the convenient passage of persons and property from one end to the other."²

The most celebrated seizures of this kind were of the "Bermuda," "Springbok," and "Peterhoff." Union cruisers seized these British-owned vessels in 1862-63, and after the close of the war the owners tried to recover damages by appealing to the United States Supreme Court. The Court, however, upheld the seizures and in so doing admitted as valid such purely circumstantial evidence as (1)

¹ I have borrowed heavily for this chapter from the outstanding contributions by Professor J. P. Baxter on "The British Government and Neutral Rights, 1861-1865," *American Historical Review*, XXXIV (1928), 9-29, and "Some British Opinions as to Neutral Rights, 1861-1865," *American Journal of International Law*, XXIII (1929), 517-37.

This case study must be read with chapter 7, above, in mind. Chapter 7 presents the fundamentals of British policy toward the Civil War. Considering the work of Professors E. D. Adams, Baxter, and Frank L. Owsley there remains no basis whatever for the idea so firmly fixed in the American mind since 1861 that Britain violated her neutrality. Yet some writers continue to affirm the old belief that she "shamelessly" disregarded her duties.

² Savage, *Policy of the United States toward Maritime Commerce in War* (2 vols., Washington, D.C., 1934) I, 457. Savage reprints the decisions of the Supreme Court.

the fact that Nassau was a small port with no market for guns and munitions, (2) the fact that owners of the contraband cargo on board were owners also of vessels known to be blockade runners, and (3) the fact that letters and other incriminating papers on board revealed the true destination of the cargo. Most sweeping was the Court's decision in the case of the "Peterhoff," captured near St. Thomas, Danish West Indies, in February 1863. The "Peterhoff" was bound for the mouth of the Rio Grande, whence its cargo (partly guns and munitions, but chiefly general merchandise) was intended for lightering forty miles upstream to the Mexican town of Matamoros. Circumstantial evidence disclosed that the real destination of the munitions was Brownsville, Texas, a town controlled by the Confederates, on the opposite side of the river; and on this basis the Court upheld the seizure of the whole cargo, and allowed restitution of the vessel only on condition that her owners paid the court costs.

These decisions became part of the classic basis of the doctrine of continuous voyage, and served the British government in good stead when the circumstances of the World War of 1914 invoked a kindred situation. But to return to the questions which confronted Admiral Milne at the time these seizures took place. At home the Admiralty thought a belligerent warship had no right to intercept a neutral merchantman when it was sailing to a neutral port; but in practice it gave orders to British warships not to interfere with Federal seizures of British ships, unless those seizures took place in British territorial waters. And suggestions to convoy British merchantmen on their voyages to the West Indies were flatly turned down.

Considering all the circumstances, British neutrality in the American Civil War was an important achievement. A disposition to interfere would have been open to easy justification under a number of pretexts in defense of "neutral rights." The vital factor is that the British were determined to remain neutral in their own interests, and that an indulgent attitude toward "neutral rights" was known to conform with long-range British naval interests. Strict neutrality was therefore the consequence, and whenever doubts arose they were resolved in favor of the Union Navy. British sea power was kept rigorously in leash, even in the smallest matters, and no incident occurred allowing it to play into the hands of the Southern Confederacy.

CHAPTER 54

NEUTRAL RIGHTS: THE WORLD WAR
OF 1914-1918

THE FUNDAMENTAL condition which faced British sea power in the War of 1914-1918 was the presence on the Continent of neutral countries whose territories were either directly adjacent to that of the enemy or in easy access to it. The ports of Holland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and, for a time, Italy, were so many open doors to Germany, if they were not shut, a naval blockade of the German coast would be the emptiest of gestures.

The legal precedents for closing these doors were none too sound. Not for more than a hundred years had Britain had so difficult a problem in blockade; and since the French in the time of Napoleon had controlled the countries adjacent to themselves, the British had not been troubled with issues of law concerning the freedom of trade through neutral ports. The real problems of the British in both wars were substantially the same: how to halt the sea-going commerce of hostile nations on the Continent. But the presence of neutrals in western Europe in 1914 made the difference in law. The problem was how to respect the right of the neutrals to access to the sea and yet destroy the wartime trade of Germany which was otherwise sure to flow through their ports. Obviously the Germans, no less than the Allies, regarded the continued neutrality of the small countries as a valuable asset to themselves; a neutral Holland, for instance, was of greater advantage to them than a subjugated province.

The single rule of law that the British could bring to bear on the trade of the neutral ports was the doctrine of continuous voyage. An adaptation of this principle, which had been employed since the eighteenth century, would facilitate the control of German trade without resorting to a direct blockade of a neutral port. Nevertheless, the precedents were narrow, and the Declaration of London, an international code of maritime war which represented general opinion in 1909, limited the application of the doctrine to goods classed as absolute contraband. This meant that only the immediate weapons of war could be seized when consigned to the enemy via a neutral port. Ammunition shipped via Rotterdam was good prize.

for example, but tinned beef meant for the German army and similarly routed was not

This, moreover, was the merest beginning of the problem. Old-fashioned lists of contraband goods, limited to the simpler weapons of combat in former days, proved of little value in the great struggle of the twentieth century. It was not just a question of adding to the list. The established concept of contraband had embraced commodities prepared in a form ready for immediate use by the armed forces of the enemy. Thus fodder was contraband, but only when it was intended for army horses; if shipped for civilian consumption in the enemy country, its capture on the high seas was illegal. Similarly, contraband had not formerly included such raw materials as copper ingots, raw wool and cotton, rubber, hides, and other products of which a long list had accumulated by 1914.

Such illustrations are enough to show how ill-adapted were the older practices of warfare at sea to the situation in 1914. The industrial revolution had definitely outmoded them. If sea power was to continue as an effective instrument of war, the whole matter of contraband faced a drastic overhauling. Nevertheless, the nations were poorly prepared for the change. The British themselves had failed to realize the impact that modern industrial conditions would have upon their sea power. They had co-operated with the other leading maritime states in drafting the Declaration of London. The Declaration reflected nineteenth-century concepts and virtually froze the list of contraband: the familiar raw materials were specifically exempted. Luckily for the British, wise second thought had induced them to reject this Declaration, they saved themselves from the bad light which the need for breaking a formal engagement would have otherwise shed on them.

Moreover, the First World War broke still further with the conceptions of the nineteenth century. Modern conditions simply could not be reconciled to the idea of limited combat between nations. The basic purpose of a contraband list was to emphasize the distinction between the civilian population and the armed forces, the latter alone were to win or lose the war; being passive onlookers, noncombatants were to be made to suffer as little as possible. This was a valid enough distinction in an age when the weapons of war were few and readily fashioned; but the scientific ingenuity of the modern age, and the obvious relationship between the great basic industries of a nation and the fighting ability of its armies in the field thrust the distinction into oblivion. An industrial nation like Germany, its supply of raw materials from the outside world well assured by

means of the freedom of the neutral ports, could pour scorn upon an old-fashioned blockade. Germany had scant use for imported guns and ammunition; she was even in a fair position to be self-sufficient in food; but she had a marked deficiency in raw materials, the significance of which grew in direct proportion to the improvements in the tools of fighting. At the time of the Declaration of London, for example, the use of raw cotton as the base for high explosives was unknown. Confronted with such revolutionary conditions, it is idle to assume the continued integrity of outmoded rules of law. Powerful forces released by the War of 1914-1918, in other words, compelled an abandonment of the notion that warfare could be limited to combatants; civilian labor and civilian welfare in general were equally identified with the war's fortunes.

Book international law, furthermore, laid additional restrictions on economic warfare at sea. The formula that a blockade "to be binding must be effective," for instance, was generally interpreted to require a cordon of warships stationed off the enemy coast or port. The requirement, however, ignored a fundamental of British sea power—the natural gift of geography which bestowed upon Britain the power to control the entrance to the North Sea. In fighting the war with Germany Britain improved upon the methods she had used against Napoleon. She established contraband control stations in the ports along her south coast, whence small armed vessels operated to intercept ships approaching the English Channel; a station at Kirkwall in the Orkneys performed a similar, though less effective, task in the case of vessels bound for Scandinavian ports of the Baltic.

The established rule stipulated that neutral ships could be searched for contraband only at sea. The rule had been a dead letter in the Napoleonic Wars, however, and it was to be no less so in the first World War. The ordinary procedure of a British patrol was to conduct a preliminary search at sea, lasting about three hours; then, if the boarding party was not satisfied, it ordered the neutral ship into the nearest English port for perhaps an exhaustive examination. In some cases this meant emptying the holds and keeping the vessel in port for several weeks. Inspection of the ship's manifest was the usual procedure employed by boarding officers to determine the presence of contraband. But this method was soon demonstrated to be unsatisfactory: the English found copper ingots, in high demand in Germany, concealed in bales of cotton when that commodity was still being allowed to pass; they discovered that large consignments of genuine contraband products, such as dressed beef intended for the German army, were being sent to dummy consignees

in Holland and Scandinavia, and by intercepting mail and cables from the United States and other American nations to persons in the European neutral countries, they frequently made their work easy by gaining exact advance information about the nature of cargoes

One of the simplest forms of evidence the British invoked to prove the passage of contraband through neutral European countries consisted of the trade statistics of those countries. Figures showing abnormal imports, particularly of commodities which were needed in Germany, were accepted as mute evidence that neutrals were using their position to reap a harvest of trade with Germany. The cargoes of lard and meat carried by five Norwegian vessels bound for Norway and Denmark were confiscated early in the war on evidence of this kind, subsequent testimony satisfied the British prize court that the real consignees were German agents

As the war progressed, the British refined their methods of supervision. Their general object was to close all the doors to Germany, but to impose the least possible interference upon the trade of the neutrals that was genuinely their own. Nevertheless a form of blockade was built up against the neutral ports. German goods exported through Rotterdam, for example, were refused passage; goods of a contraband nature coming from the United States and consigned to a neutral port were detained when the evidence pointed to a hostile destination. The original British contraband lists conformed partially to the traditional concept of limited warfare, but from the beginning of 1915 successive orders in council narrowed the gap between absolute and conditional contraband. Under a decree of July 1916 the list was made so extensive that the distinction between contraband and noncontraband was thereafter virtually without a difference.

Several devices were adopted to ease the strain on international law. One of the most successful of these was the establishment of a corporation in Holland known as the Netherlands Overseas Trust. The British government held an interest in the Trust, which guaranteed that consignments to it would not be re-exported to Germany. It was the part of wisdom for Dutch importers to have their shipments consigned to the Trust; for, if the entire cargo of an inbound ship was made out to this organization, the vessel escaped the compulsory deviation to a British port. Furthermore, a beginning was made on the American side of the Atlantic with the practice of granting letters of assurance to exporters who could convince British consular officials of the innocence of their cargoes. Armed with

a letter of assurance, a shipper was guaranteed against delay. This practice, however, did not develop beyond the infant stage, shippers who sought letters of assurance were put to much preliminary expense without knowing whether or not their requests would be granted, and the practice apparently never gained much popularity. A third and more general practice was to reach agreements with neutral shipping companies whereby the companies promised to have their ships call at British ports. Such agreements furnished the appearance of voluntary action on the part of the companies, and thus evaded the classical rule of search at sea. The impression that one gains is that this method of detention steadily grew in favor, since the British government had ample means of inducing neutral steamship companies to comply with its wishes. In a word, Britain resumed the position that she had held in the wars of a hundred years before. vessels both inbound and outbound from Europe called at her ports and obtained clearance before proceeding on their voyage.

To these methods of ship and cargo control there were added three other measures designed to strangle German commerce. First-class letter mail en route to the neutrals was subject to the same rigid inspection as cargoes. In 1915 and 1916 a system of censorship was built up whereby all mail sacks were removed from incoming ships and forward to the London Post Office. There the letters were opened and read before being dispatched to their final destination. The Hague Convention of 1907 expressly prohibits the interception of neutral mails by a belligerent nation. But the British were able to show early in the war that parcel-post mail was as susceptible to contraband as ordinary freight and therefore should enjoy no immunity. Letters also could contain contraband. A favorite device used to slip goods through the British control was to send "samples" as first-class mail. India rubber, for instance, of which Germany stood in great need, reached the enemy from Brazil in the form of thin sheets posted in envelopes.

But the chief advantage of the mail censorship undoubtedly was the valuable information about the movement of cargoes to be had from the inspection of shipping documents sent by mail. The censorship increased the efficiency of the contraband control. On the other hand, the British inevitably opened themselves to charges from outraged neutral shippers that they were using their advantage to steal trade secrets from the competitors of British firms. Loose accusations of this sort probably had little foundation; but there were curious inconsistencies in the blockade, nevertheless, which worked to the British advantage and eventually brought a challenge. After

raw cotton was declared contraband, for example, American shipments to neutral ports were stopped; but the American consul in London protested that the British none the less continued to re-export cotton to neutral consignees. A retort that this trade was guaranteed by the consignees against re-shipment to Germany was not convincing, and subsequent evidence produced by the British naval attaché in Scandinavia bore out the suspicion. The guaranties particularly of Danish and Swedish importers were practically worthless, and large quantities of precious contraband found their way to the enemy, often at the hands of British exporters.

The British Empire possessed an incomparable advantage in the monopoly which it held of the distribution of bunker coal for ships. In 1915 the British government began to apply its monopoly against neutral steamship firms so as to compel their co-operation in the general economic war which it was gradually developing against the Germans. The threat to withhold coal from the ship or shipping company that accepted cargoes from Germans was capable of bringing results. The restriction applied not only to British home ports but to colonial coaling stations throughout the world which, lying on the trade routes, customarily refilled the bunkers of passing ships. Thus an important coaling station like Trinidad in the Caribbean proved a valuable asset in the war against German commerce in South America, and the British economic campaign went far beyond the original purpose of closing the doors to the trade of Germany proper. There was, of course, no point of international law involved in this matter; the British government could not be coerced into selling coal to neutral ships against its will. It was ready to extend the favor to vessels which helped the British war effort and to cold-shoulder those which carried freight for its enemies.

Bunker control was closely associated with the system of black-listing firms in various neutral countries which accepted orders from Germans. Armed with the authority of a trading-with-the-enemy Act, the British government prohibited its subjects from dealing with firms known to be helping the enemy. Merchants of German origin in the United States naturally were put on the blacklist, especially if they were known to have tried selling contraband to Germany. But the blacklist could be, and was, refined much further. Firms that dealt with blacklisted concerns sometimes found the same treatment meted out to them, and the apparent purpose was to isolate and ruin the original offender. So long as the system functioned quietly, it attracted little attention. But in the spring of 1916 the British government began issuing public lists of blacklisted firms in various neu-

tral countries. The inclusion of eighty-five American concerns on the public list led to the general speculation that there were many more on the secret list. Business men raised a cry of alarm that they were being played off one against the other, some being afraid to enter into contracts with others lest they too be added to the list and deprived of their chances for a share in the lucrative war orders pouring in from overseas. The scare undoubtedly exceeded the realities of the threat, and the importance of the issue came chiefly from the bad blood that it stirred up among the public against the British cause. No injury that the British were charged with inflicting on American neutral rights since the beginning of the war aroused so loud and general a chorus of indignation as the blacklist. But there was properly no legal right involved on the part of the blacklisted person; he was simply deprived of his opportunity to trade with British subjects or, in some cases, to have his goods transported by steamship companies which were anxious to stay in British good graces.

The notoriety of the blacklist embarrassed and irritated the American government and brought from Congress in September 1916 an act authorizing the President to retaliate. Cooler heads in the administration, however, pointed out the futility of robbing Peter to pay Paul, particularly at a time when the general trade with the Allies had reached gigantic proportions; and the issue which pro-German and Irish elements throughout the United States had seized upon as a peg for their passions during the presidential campaign of 1916 soon lost its power to excite the public generally. Indeed the manner in which the act was passed and the alacrity with which its reprisal provisions were pigeonholed afterward suggest that it was deliberately intended to throw the Anglophobe voters off the scent. Publicity subsided, but the blacklist went on. It and the bunker coal agreements were hints of what might be accomplished in the direction of total economic war, and the United States eventually adopted substantially the same measures. Extensive American lists and bunkering agreements, aimed at enemy nationals the world over and at neutrals who dared to trade with Germans, showed how long-armed American economic power could be, once it was mobilized against the foe.

This takes us back to the beginning of the war in 1914. Historically the United States was a champion of neutral rights, a concept which in the past had served its interests as a trading nation, anxious to get the most out of its overseas commerce, and indifferent to the

political results of a war in Europe. The situation in 1914 was an ominous one; President Wilson thought he saw a possible repetition of the clash with Britain in 1812, and feared lest popular passions in relation to neutral rights would drive him into war, as they had Madison. Furthermore, Wilson's own bias was for "freedom of the seas," though his later Secretary of State, Robert Lansing, bears witness to the fact that the President was never able to clothe the phrase with meaning.

The Declaration of London of 1909 was a refinement of the classical conception of neutral rights, and it was to this instrument that the American government first turned as the basis for its policy. The Declaration, as we have seen, exempted the chief raw materials and food staples from capture and legalized the doctrine of continuous voyage only in the case of absolute contraband. To this end it was assumed to be of especial advantage to the United States because of the nature of American exports; but by the same token it was so harmful to Britain as virtually to stultify her sea power. It is doubtful whether the American government appreciated the importance of its own position. Certainly there is no evidence that it did so at the beginning. The United States really held the balance in its hands in 1914—a decision to insist on the Declaration of London would have been readily enforceable through a munitions embargo and other weapons of economic reprisal against Great Britain. The British were vitally dependent upon American economic power in this conflict, whereas in the Napoleonic Wars they had not been. The British government perceived its dependence; it wanted to submit its own list of contraband confidentially to the American government and get American consent before making the list public. The point was that it must intercept supplies reaching the German army and German war factories via the neutral ports of Europe or lose the war. Sir Edward Grey cabled:

We are most anxious to come to an agreement with United States government for otherwise we shall have to choose between a dispute with United States government or giving up all attempts to prevent Germany from getting free supplies for her army and materials for all munitions of war: either alternative would or might be fatal to our chance of success and insure ultimate German victory or disappearance of Great Britain as a fully independent Power in Europe. . . .¹

The real question that begged an answer in Washington was this: were neutral rights worth the price of a Germany victory? The

¹ *The Lansing Papers*, I, 250-52.

issue was by no means so clear cut to the men in the American government at the time. There was a great reluctance to interfere with the British war effort, however. The British plea made an impression, and in law it was partially supported by the methods the United States itself had employed in waging war against the South. The underlying object then, as in 1914, was to prevent essential supplies from reaching the enemy, and in that conflict the British had refrained from exercising their neutral rights. Reasons of higher policy had then dictated their choice. They could hardly have been entirely absent from American counsels now. Sir Edward's communication, as cited above, was put directly into President Wilson's hands the same day it was sent, October 15, and the President immediately forwarded it to Lansing, who was then Acting Secretary of State. And from London the American Ambassador, Walter Hines Page, added his voice in support of Sir Edward Grey. He warned:

Look a little further ahead. If Germany wins, it will make no matter what position Great Britain took on the Declaration of London. We shall see the Monroe Doctrine shot through. We shall have to have a great army and navy. . . .²

The situation was very delicate, and the United States could not openly retreat from the position of champion it had so long held. Aside from the loss in prestige it would be bound to incur from a change in policy, there were the bitter complaints of powerful shippers to be considered. In 1914 and 1915 the cotton growers of the South, the copper-mining companies of the Far West, and the meat packers of the Middle West felt themselves particularly aggrieved over the British interference with their markets on the European continent. To their cries for redress was added a general public clamor which became the more shrill as the British regulations grew in severity.³ Outwardly the American government continued its

² *Foreign Relations of the United States*, Supplement, 1914, p. 248.

³ Shippers' complaints had the flimsiest basis in fact. There were 2,658 claims filed after the war for redress from the British government. An exhaustive investigation conducted by the United States government in 1926 revealed that *all but eleven* of these were fabrications. The two countries signed an executive agreement, May 19, 1927, to the effect that each would waive all claims for alleged damage incurred by private citizens of either country from the action of the other during the war. *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1926, II, 251-308.

In this connection the following comment, which the Hon. Hunter Miller, Editor of the *Treaties*, Department of State, wrote to the author on February 20, 1943, is illuminating: "Neither the British Government nor the Department of State understood the facts of the eastbound traffic across the Atlantic in 1914-16. Shipments

homage to the classical principles which it identified as international law; from time to time it dispatched lengthy notes reproaching the British government for its serious breach of those principles.⁴ The compulsory deviation of neutral vessels from their course, the illegality of blockading neutral ports, the inquisitorial methods which the British devised to procure evidence of contraband, complaints against the sweeping nature of the contraband lists, and recitals of the losses and delays said to be suffered by American shippers formed the burden of successive protests to London. The German submarine warfare drew off most of the popular indignation in 1915, but after the issues with Germany were temporarily disposed of in September the administration felt the pressure from a large body of pacifist and anti-British opinion mobilized chiefly in the Middle West. It hoped to appease this sentiment by sending, and making public, a particu-

to the Allies were paid for by J. P. Morgan and Company [for Allied account] before they went aboard ship, so Mr. Morgan testified before the Nye Committee [in 1934]. Also the shipments to Germany through Stockholm, etc., were paid for by the Germans, the American exporters (packers, etc.) took no risk; they would have been fools to do so. But the Department of State, misled by false allegations of 'reputable' lawyers and business men, and without making sure of the facts, regarded those cargoes as 'American' and wrote the notes about them which are of record. As legal disquisitions those notes may stand up, but they had no relation to realities. In 1927, after exhaustive examination of the alleged 'claims' against Great Britain, this Government assumed them, and no cargo claim was established during the next 12 years. The reason was that no valid cargo claim existed; the British were entitled to take the goods as German owned. One of our most vigorous notes was about an 'American' cargo which was later definitely proved to have belonged to the German Government, paid for by funds of that Government. Notwithstanding these facts, historians all write of British disregard of American neutral rights; the notes to Great Britain are taken at their face."

⁴ There was an inherent weakness in the legal assumptions of the American notes. What the United States held to be international law in the matter of neutral rights was really only its own version of the law, shaped according to its own national interests in the past. Thomas A. Bailey describes the fallacy in the American position as follows:

"... Who is to judge whether international law has been violated or not? In a few isolated cases involving the United States as a belligerent the questions at issue were referred to arbitral tribunals or courts. But in a great majority of instances from 1914 to 1918 one side would insist that international law had been flouted; the other would deny it. There the matter would rest, with the partisans of each side confident that they had the better of the argument. Where the principles of international law clearly supported one party to a dispute, the other could invoke (and frequently did) the principles of reprisal, retortion, retaliation, or some other weapon that rendered international law meaningless. In fact, there were very few, if any, legal controversies during the entire war in which each side could not make out a case. The case might have been good or bad; it might have been rejected by a competent judicial body; but the case was made out. One should be very sure of one's ground indeed before asserting that any particular belligerent was definitely guilty of a breach of international law." *The Policy of the United States toward the Neutrals, 1917-1918* (Baltimore, 1942), p. 15.

larly argumentative and sharply worded note to the British government in October. The United States, so the note declared, "unhesitatingly assumes" the "task of championing the integrity of neutral rights"; but no time limit was set on a reply and no hint of a reprisal was made. Before the British sent their response in the following April they had practically obliterated the distinction between contraband and noncontraband, extended the blacklisting system, and advanced the detention and search of first-class mails.

The formal notes comprised the façade of neutral rights; large popular elements in the country demanded that the belligerents be treated impartially—that a note of protest to Germany over the submarine be followed by a note to Britain over the blockade. This was the course that Bryan, who was nominal head of the State Department until the summer of 1915, wanted to follow. But the realities were different: keener men than Bryan perceived the fatuity of such a policy and had no intention of forcing the issue with Britain. An artificial framework of law, however hallowed, was not to be permitted to stand in the way of vital considerations of national policy. In January 1916 Mr. Page sent advance notice from London of British plans to strengthen the blockade, which was believed to be the decisive weapon of war. The aggressions of Japan in China which had occurred the preceding year, he declared, made it all the more important that the United States give Britain a blank check. Japan "wishes to set up a sort of Monroe Doctrine behind which it is feared she would exploit China and dominate the Pacific," he declared. He continued:

England withholds her consent and has provoked an angry attitude by Japan, who wishes to secure her spoils and privileges while England is helplessly engaged in the [war with] Germany. The British Government . . . is for the moment helpless. England's final attitude to Japan must depend largely on the [feeling] at the end of the war between England and the United States. If the United States should oppose the blockade [of Germany] and the war should end as a draw, Japan will be able to extort her full demands because England will need her Navy indefinitely on this side of the world. If the United States acquiesce in the blockade and the war ends with German defeat, both England and the United States will be in the way of Japan's aggressions. . . .⁶

The point was not wholly accepted in Washington, but it left its mark. The Secretary of State was impressed by it, and so was Wilson. "Indeed," remarked the President, "the arguments [Page]

⁶ *The Lansing Papers*, I, 306. See also chapter 24, pp. 323-66.

urges are evident enough and of considerable weight." Protests continued to flow from Washington over the British interference with the mails, over the blacklist, and over the seizure of enemy aliens from the decks of American vessels, but nothing more serious than verbal arguments was intended.*

After its formal entrance into the war in April 1917 the United States found ways and means of waging total economic warfare against Germany without wholly repudiating the principles to which it had paid lip service in its several notes to Great Britain. The basis for American wartime policy was the manipulation of the country's economic resources in such a way as to benefit those neutrals who co-operated in the trade war against the enemy. Thus the Continental neutrals were warned not to deplete their existing food stocks by exporting to Germany; if they did, the deficiency would not be made up by shipments from the United States. The War Trade Board, established in October 1917, set out to require the neutrals to cease *all* exports to Germany on pain of having their American trade embargoed. This program the Board later acknowledged to have fallen short of success. But in many ways, nevertheless, the pressure was increased. Spain was told that if she wanted American coal, of which she stood in need in 1917, she would have to export iron ore to Britain so as to relieve the United States of the necessity of using up cargo space for ore shipments overseas. And to neutral ships bunker licenses were refused unless they agreed to carry cargoes to the Allies.

In March 1918 Dutch merchant ships in American harbors were requisitioned, and the Dutch were informed that two of the vessels would be released to carry foodstuffs to Holland only on condition that they release the equivalent tonnage from their home ports to be turned over to the United States. German threats frightened the Dutch into rejecting the condition, and the food ships were not dispatched. Furthermore, neutral carriers were obliged to sign agreements not to transport enemy aliens or enemy agents, otherwise bunker privileges would be withheld from them. This went decidedly beyond the type of bunker control exercised by the British, who were much more dependent upon the goodwill of the European neutrals than the United States. British coal continued to furnish the fuel of Danish, Norwegian, and Swedish ships, as well as industries, which served the enemy during the course of the war.

Finally, having itself entered the war, the United States composed

* American policy toward neutral rights in 1914-1917 becomes more intelligible if the reader has first studied chapter 22, above, pp. 254-90.

it own blacklist, chiefly of enemy firms in Latin America, and co-ordinated its list with those of the Allies. It also set up a Mail Censorship Board in October 1917, with the duty of examining all mail in transit between Spain and the Latin-American countries on vessels which should touch at an American port. To make the censorship more effective, it persuaded the Cuban government to do the same. Havana was a common port of call for vessels entering the Gulf of Mexico from Spain, and it was important to intercept the espionage believed to be so active in Mexico and Central American countries.

These measures, supplemented by direct action on the part of the American Navy co-operating with the British in the North Sea, pointed toward the total exclusion of the enemy from the seven seas and the complete regulation of the neutrals. The two navies sowed a vast mine field, two hundred and thirty miles in length, between the coast of northern Scotland and the territorial waters of Norway. Since the North Sea was commonly regarded as part of the open ocean the resemblance of the mine field to the traditional American version of a "legal" blockade was very faint indeed. The field was intended to stop the exit of German submarines into the Atlantic, but unfortunately it was not allowed to accomplish its purpose until its usefulness was virtually over. Largely at the instance of Wilson, the Norwegians were not compelled to mine their own waters; hence German U-boats still possessed an escapement. When the war was within a month of its end, and it was evident that Germany was done for, the Norwegians consented to close their waters.

The first World War wrought a practical change in American policy that virtually extinguished the Jeffersonian conception of neutral rights. Impressment, which had been so central an issue with the British in Jefferson's day, was of course no longer at issue. "Neutral rights" in Wilson's day solely concerned questions of money; and, as we have noted, the Americans, like other neutrals, got profits from the war; "losses" were purely fictitious. Jefferson once considered the danger of a British defeat in 1804. He had serious misgivings of the fate of the United States in case Napoleon should win a victory. But the British saved him the quandary into which Wilson was thrown, when the latter was forced for practical reasons to sidestep historic American principles. Britain crushed Napoleon's sea power at Trafalgar in 1805, and established her own hegemony over the Atlantic. It was this hegemony that Jefferson and his successor, James Madison, challenged. They did not need to stand in fear of a French victory. But the situation in 1914-1917 was in reverse. A potent Continental aggressor threatened to wrest

control of the Atlantic and to challenge the system, as well as the ideals, on which the power of the United States rested. Neutral rights, an instrument for redressing overweening British sea power at the beginning of the nineteenth century, were nothing but a boomerang in the great struggle of the twentieth century.

THE END OF NEUTRAL RIGHTS

At the end of the war the United States had the empty satisfaction of being able to say that it still stood on its historic interpretation of "neutral rights." It had used the weapon of the embargo and kindred measures as the core of its economic warfare against Germany, and under the influence of Wilson it had meticulously avoided associating itself with the methods of control pursued by the British. The embargo was not in violation of "international law," since it was an act of sovereignty exercised within the jurisdiction of the United States.

Such an attitude seems highly casuistical. The simple fact was that the United States was making progress toward total war and was using its own particular choice of means. As far as the effect on the remaining neutrals was concerned, it was like the position of the condemned man who is free to choose between the electric chair and the gallows.

For the sake of the public record the Executive Agreement of May 19, 1927, stipulated that each government "fully reserved" its right "to maintain in the future such position as it may deem appropriate with respect to the legality or illegality under international law of measures such as those giving rise to claims covered" by the agreement. But privately the American government had no reservation on the matter. It considered the position it would be in as a belligerent in the next war. "We are one of the principal naval powers of the world," declared the report on the claims. "We shall unquestionably want to pursue very much the same procedure as that followed by the British. In these circumstances we should take no general position in our present discussions which might later hamper our freedom of action in case of emergency."⁷

World War II quickly demonstrated how sound this prophecy was. Old practices of blockade and search at sea were not revived; but new methods of exerting control at the source lifted economic warfare to new levels of efficiency. These methods included: (1) the chartering by the Allies of as much neutral tonnage as possible, thereby insuring that it would serve only Allied purposes; (2) the

⁷ *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1926, II, 287.*

negotiation of a series of over-all contracts with producing countries for the purchase of exportable surpluses of strategic materials; (3) instigation of a financial blockade which denied means of payment to neutrals in transactions involving the enemy; (4) the extension of a blacklist, coupled with the warning in 1944 that the blacklist would be carried over into the postwar period; (5) the negotiation of war-trade agreements with neutrals, such as Sweden and Switzerland, in which the furnishing of supplies to these countries was made contingent upon their consent to stop, or reduce, exports of ball bearings, iron ore, precision tools, etc., to Germany.

All five of these methods hark back to World War I. But by far the most effective instrument was the *navicert*, an outgrowth of the "letter of assurance" described in the text above (pp 756-57). *Navicerts* were passports granted to innocent cargo, facilitating its passage through the blockade. Until July 31, 1940, the obtaining of a *navicert* was optional with a neutral shipper; but thereafter it was made compulsory. Moreover, ship as well as cargo had to be *navicerted*, and the presence of any un*navicerted* cargo on board was sufficient ground for withholding a *navicert* from the vessel. A Blockade Committee, sitting daily in London, refined this system of control to a very high degree. For instance, if either a consignor or a consignee was on the blacklist, the *navicert* was refused.

From open approval of the Blockade Committee and its procedures, many of which the United States itself had either suggested or initiated in World War I, the American government passed shortly after Pearl Harbor to full participation.⁸

⁸ For an instructive account see *The Department of State Bulletin*, XI (No. 282, November 19, 1944), 597 ff., "The Allied Blockade," by John V. Lovitt.

CONCLUSION

THIS BOOK must end, as it began, on the theme of security. It is the only one of the three underlying concepts, treated in the foregoing chapters, distinguishable today as a ruling force in American foreign policy. Neutrality must now be regarded as extinct, whether as an instrument of policy or as a body of substantive international law. Advancing ideas of collective security made it anachronistic. The World War of 1914-1918 passed it into obsolescence; the Second World War destroyed it. In its history, however, American neutrality suggests a conclusion of tremendous import. It is identified with the age of nationalism. Neutrality was conceived in the first instance as a means of promoting sovereign independence; the period of its effective use was coincidental with the evolution of the American national state; and its demise in 1940 is forcible testimony to the crumbling of nationalism and the beginnings of a great world social revolution pointed toward new loyalties and new forms of political organization.

Likewise concepts of expansion, at least as they took shape in territorial aggrandizement, belong to the age of nationalism. American territorial ambitions burned themselves out in the nineteenth century, and by 1900 the United States was a satiated power. It is of historical significance that the chapters in this volume which illustrate the development of manifest destiny all fall within the hundred-year period between the Louisiana Purchase and the acquisition of the Panama Canal Zone. With the latter event the American quest for empire was virtually over. Other facets of manifest destiny—commercial imperialism, the desire for command of the seas, the taste for asserting moral leadership over the world—lived on, of course, but tended to retreat into the ideology of security.

It seems likely, therefore, that American foreign policy will in the future be governed chiefly by considerations of security. Unlike the other two basic concepts, ideas of security have raised an unbroken chain of issues through the whole of American history. As in the

first half-century after independence, so during the half-century since 1900 they have tended to crowd other impulses into the background. In a world which is just beginning to experience the backwash of a terrible war, a world over which hangs the dread fear of the atomic bomb and other weapons capable of mass annihilation, the search for security will go on with renewed vigor. The concept, it must be said, defies definition. It is an abstraction which finds concrete expression in policies far broader and subtler in their implications than mere defense programs. From the history of American diplomacy we see that the security of the United States has never been confined to the defense of its continental boundaries. American security is conditioned by the *position* of the United States in the family of nations. But the position of the United States has never been a fixed fact; on the contrary, it has been subject to ceaseless change. In the early days of the Republic, considerations of security were evolved in connection with a program to achieve power and greatness. Today the United States is a world power whose strength is in many respects unmatched. Yet it feels insecure. In a word, the quest for security is equivalent to the struggle for survival.

Today the chief hope for American security is bound up with the fate of world peace. A third great war, it is believed, will extinguish civilization. But the world is ill prepared to practice permanent peace. This concept is new to the history of ideas, having taken root only during the last twenty-five years. War is as familiar to history as peace. The nineteenth century was allegedly a "peaceful" century. Yet there were forty-eight wars between 1850 and 1900 and twenty-four wars between that date and 1941. In the three and one-half centuries since the death of Queen Elizabeth there have been fifteen general wars, in which with few exceptions all the great powers of the time participated.¹

To practice permanent peace means to project into the field of international relations the ancient principle of the reign of law over individuals. It invokes the development of new attitudes, new techniques, and new institutions. To say this, however, is merely to beg the question. The peace of the world is admittedly the creature of great-power relationships. The United Nations rests upon the existence of a permanent alliance of the great powers whose clashing policies have in the past produced great wars. Nor is it fair to say that the United States has been an exception to this rule. It cannot be dismissed lightly as a "peace-loving" nation. The spacing be-

¹ Quincy Wright, *A Study of War* (2 vols., Chicago, 1942), I, 639.

tween its wars has not been longer than the average interval between wars in general. Barely fifty years have elapsed since the United States championed its title as a great power, during this period it has continued to cultivate global policies, the origins of which are to be found far back in the aspirations of the eighteenth-century Colonies. Today the United States has no choice but to try to co-ordinate its world policies with those of the other great world states and to do its part in helping to polish off the rough edges in great-power relations. Failure of this mission spells permanent disaster.

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